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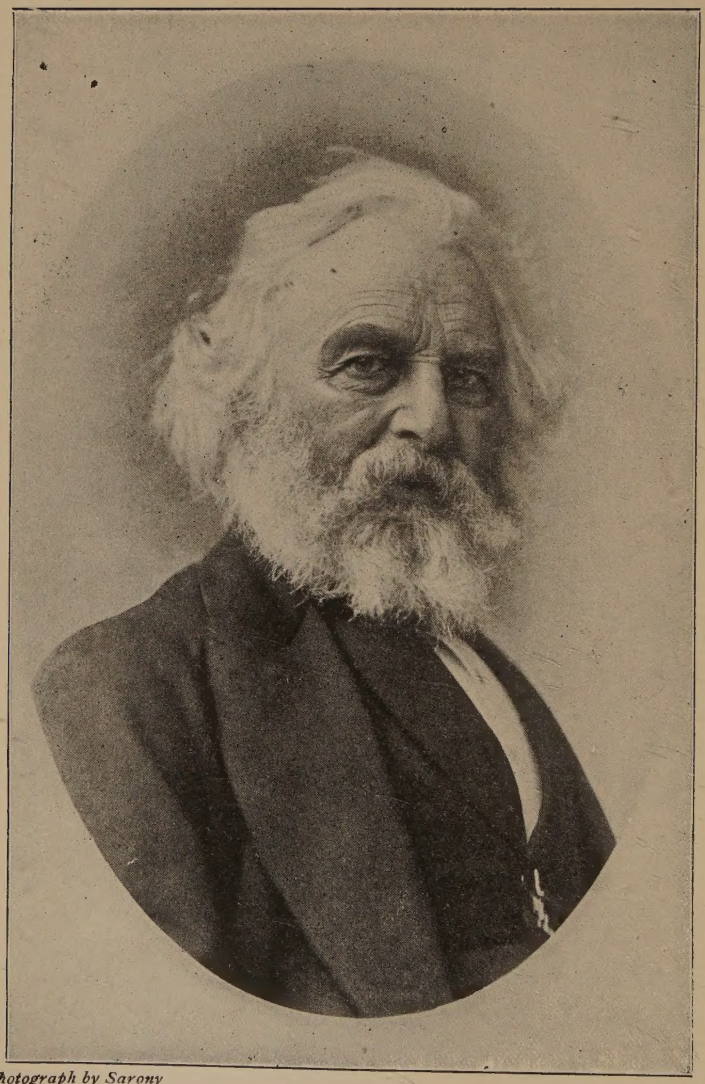
POPULAR STUDIES IN
AMERICAN LITERATURE



Photograph by Sarony

Longfellow in His Old Age

"Segnius irritant animum demissa per aures, quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus."

"Things seen by the trustworthy eye, more deeply impress the mind than those which are merely heard."

American College Course

✠

1923

PROFESSOR SEYMOUR EATON

DIRECTOR-IN-CHIEF

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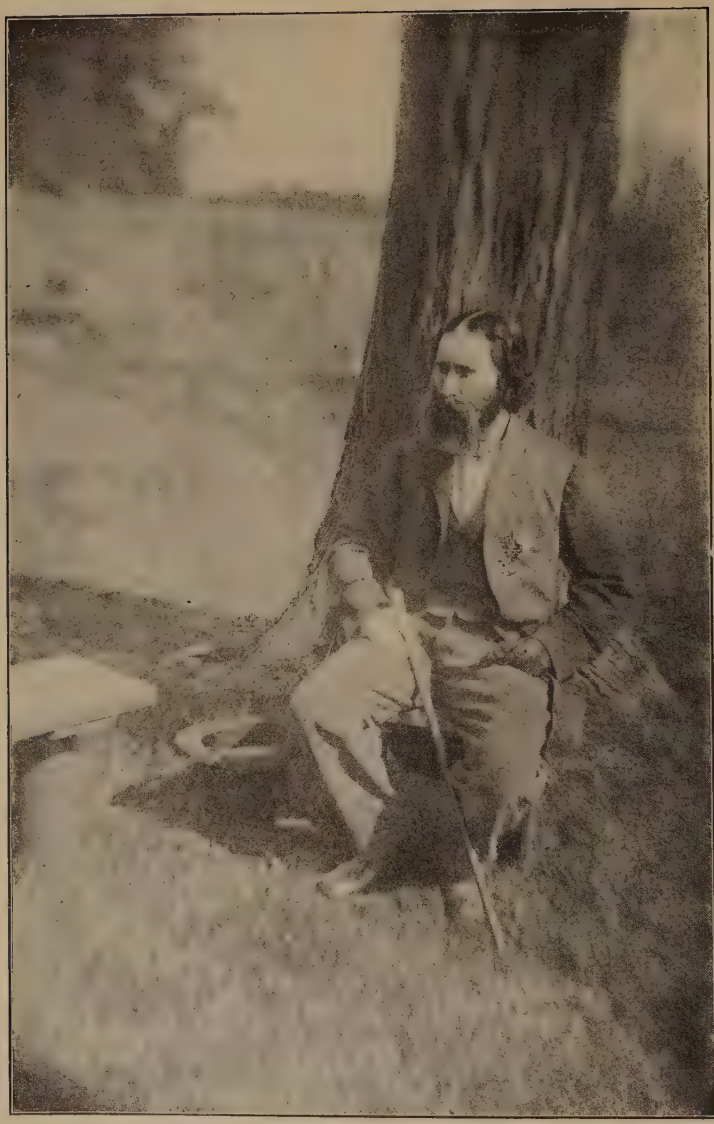

J. R. Lowell. Elmwood: 16th Decr 1865.

O. W. Holmes phot.
1864.

From a photograph loaned by Mr. Charles Akers.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

As stated in the Introductory Note to the first volume of the present series, these books are in reality, as their names imply, "popular studies." Everything in them has been written or prepared with the needs of the general reader or student in view as distinct from those of the professed special student. The intention has been to afford such information respecting the authors selected for treatment as will make the study of them not only a pleasure, but an easy pleasure. To that end broad and general views have been presented rather than minute and special ones.

Pains have been taken to illustrate the personalities of the authors; to show them as they were as men and citizens, and in their private life and home relations.

Very useful, we trust, will be found the notes prepared for readers for use in their own individual studies of the authors. These notes are sufficiently complete to meet the needs of all classes of readers—those who desire to go pretty far in their studies, as well as those who have time and opportunity to go only a little way.

Although published in three volumes, these studies constitute one continuous series. Ten authors have been selected for treatment, the ten greatest names in American literature. The student-reader should not rest satisfied until he has made a pretty thorough acquaintance with the whole ten.

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HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

1807-1882.

"The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night."
—*The Ladder of St. Augustine.*

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."
—*The Psalm of Life.*

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY.

By John Ebenezer Bryant.

Longfellow is America's greatest poet. He is also the world's most popular poet. Even in England he is far more widely read than Tennyson. Tennyson's most popular work is national and local; Longfellow's is cos-

mopolitan and universal. The "Psalm of Life" is a psalm of humanity. "Resignation," "The Bridge," "The Reaper and the Flowers," "The Two Angels," are psalms also—psalms that embody in tuneful note and chord the hope and faith of a world-wide Christianity. "The Rainy Day," "Excelsior," "The Arrow and the Song," "The Day is Done," "The Children's Hour," are lyrics that win the popular heart because they give expression to thoughts and feelings that are common to the popular heart. "The Ladder of St. Augustine," "The Builders," "Maidenhood," "Footsteps of Angels," "The Village Blacksmith," "The Rope Walk," "Haunted Houses," are universal favourites because their sentiment, their teaching, their images and other poetic devices, though all in harmony with the highest art, are yet all within the perceptive and receptive powers of the ordinary reader. In short, Longfellow's poems are universally popular for the same reason that "The Pilgrim's Progress," the proverbs of Solomon, the psalms of David, the parables of Jesus, are universally popular; that is, because they set forth the great things of life, and death, and immortal hope, in language understood of the people.

Longfellow's character no less won the love of the people than his poems. Like his poems it was easily understood. There was no artifice in it. Nor was there any admixture of anything gross or base. It was simple, sincere, full of meaning, full of power, full of dignity, but full also of benignity and grace. No man that ever lived lived a broader, a deeper, a more purposeful life than he. And no man that ever lived filled the measure of his life

LONGFELLOW IN 1847.

more completely. From his earliest manhood he knew what he wished to be and to do. His aims were of the highest and the worthiest, and they implied the discipline of a pure life and an unselfish heart. This discipline he maintained to the end; so that what perhaps at first had been only a consciously adopted rule of conduct became at last of the very essence of his being. Certainly the fire of poetic genius never animated a more unselfish heart or glowed in a purer life than his.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, February 27, 1807. His father was Stephen Longfellow, a lawyer of that town, an eminently good and lovable man—successful, well thought of, and well to do, and descended from a long line of Longfellow ancestors that had steadily risen in prosperity and influence from the time that William Longfellow of Hampshire, England, in the reign of Charles II., had first set foot on New England soil. His mother was Zilpah Wadsworth, a beautiful woman—kind, charitable, and sympathetic—a lover of nature, a lover of the Bible, and a lover especially of the poetry of the Bible. Her father was Peleg Wadsworth, who had fought and got wounds and honour on revolutionary battlefields, and had risen thereby to the rank of general. Remoter and more celebrated ancestors on the mother's side were the John Alden and Priscilla of "The Courtship of Miles Standish." Thus Longfellow, like Bryant, Hawthorne, Emerson, Whittier, Holmes, and Lowell, came of the choicest New England stock. History will account it of the chiefest glories of New England that these seven men, who are, indeed, the

seven lamps of light in American literature, should all, in parentage and in lineage, have been indigenous to her soil.

Longfellow, like Tennyson, was a poet from his earliest youth. From his earliest youth, also, he was indifferent to the sports and enjoyments usually affected by youths and young men. He was fond of no exercise save walking. His elder brother, who had a young man's usual passion for a gun, once persuaded him to shoot at a robin. He killed the bird, but he never pulled a trigger again. He enjoyed music, and he enjoyed poetry. But he especially enjoyed such prose imaginative works as "The Arabian Nights," "Don Quixote," and Irving's "Sketch Book." "The Sketch Book" was, indeed, his favourite book of all. Years afterward he wrote: "I was a schoolboy when it was published; and I read each succeeding number with ever-increasing wonder and delight, spellbound by its pleasant humour, its melancholy, and its atmosphere of reverie." When he came to write prose himself, it was found that his own style had been modelled upon that of Irving. But Longfellow's youth was most remarkable for the depth and strength, the vividness and definiteness, of the impressions of nature which he then received. In after years he was too much of a student, too much of a house recluse, to keep up any familiarity with nature direct. Even the beautiful natural imagery of "Evangeline" was written from recollections of rural scenes that once had being near his youthful home. Even the wilder and more striking imagery of "Hiawatha" was but the memory of impressions received in early rambles

From an Engraving.

Longfellow in 1842

through the woods and forests of Maine. If ever they were true of any one, the words of his own beautiful poem were true of himself:

"The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

But though he early wrote and early published poems, it was not until he was at college that his poetic work came to be intrinsically valuable.

Longfellow was sent to Bowdoin College in 1822. He was then but fifteen years of age. His father had been educated at Harvard, but patriotism had impelled him to place his son in the college of his own State. Here the young poet formed acquaintance with several men who afterward became illustrious. One of these was Hawthorne, whose exquisite but late-flowering genius Longfellow in after years was one of the first to recognise and publicly proclaim. But even at college Hawthorne's life was already one of seemingly idle dreaming and unstudious habits. Longfellow's college life, in contrast, was conspicuously regular, brilliantly successful, and fruitful of immediate important results. When he had graduated the college trustees proposed to appoint him their professor of modern languages, with the understanding, however, that he should spend some time in Europe to fit himself more thoroughly for the post. This was precisely the line of advancement that Longfellow would have chosen for himself. His father had desired that he should follow the profession of law. But Longfellow had other wishes. In reply to a letter from his father he thus expressed himself: "I most eagerly aspire after future eminence in litera-

ture. My whole soul burns most ardently for it; my every earthly thought centres in it. There may be something visionary in this; but I flatter myself that I have prudence enough to keep my enthusiasm from defeating itself by too great haste. Surely there never was a better opportunity offered for the exercise of literary talent in our own country than is now offered. With such a belief I am unwilling to engage in the study of law." Longfellow's predilection for literature was justified by the successes he had already won. Even the poems he had written before he went to college had been welcomely received by the readers of the *Gazette* of his own town. But the poems he had written at college had found a wider audience. They had been published in the *American Monthly Magazine* and the *United States Literary Gazette*, the two leading literary publications of the day. When, therefore, the proposition of the Bowdoin trustees was made known to him, he gladly accepted it. He had graduated in 1825 at the age of eighteen. The autumn of 1825 and the spring of 1826 he spent in rest. In May, 1826, he sailed, via New York, for Europe.

Longfellow spent three years in Europe. He resided and travelled in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany. He learned the languages of these countries so that he could both speak and write them. His faculty for acquiring languages was an uncommon one. He afterward obtained familiarity with most of the literary languages of modern Europe. During this residence abroad, also, he studied deeply the literatures of the countries he visited. He became profoundly interested in the romantic legend-

ary history of mediæval Europe, and many of his most beautiful poems owe their inspiration to the scenes and studies of this three years' impressive tour. He studied, also, contemporary life and character; and though his letters, written while abroad, did not show any marked liter-

THE WADSWORTH-LONGFELLOW HOUSE, PORTLAND, ME.

ary gift, yet, when afterward (in 1835) he published his travels in book form as "Outre Mer," his pleasing and lucid accounts of European scenery and peoples won for him at once a gratifying popularity as a worthy successor to the author of "The Sketch Book." He returned home

in the summer of 1829, and in September of that year entered upon his duties as professor at Bowdoin. He was only twenty-two, but even at that age he was perhaps the most accomplished scholar in America. He worked hard for his classes. He taught well. But he was methodical in all he did, and by dint of that habit, and of economy of time, his accomplishment was remarkable. He not only wrote "Outre Mer," but he also wrote important articles for the *North American Review* and the *New England Magazine;* he translated foreign text-books for his students; he wrote out systematic courses of lectures in French, Spanish, and Italian literature; he translated the Spanish poem "Coplas de Manrique" and other foreign poems, and altogether he was as effectively busy as a man could be. At this period of his life, however, he wrote but little original poetry. His mind, for the time, seems in its action to have been almost wholly receptive. But he had married, and he was very happy. His wife was Mary Storer Potter, a beautiful woman, the daughter of a friend of his father's. Refined, accomplished, of congenial tastes and habits, she was the abiding joy of his studious life, the "Being Beauteous" that he named her of his quiet and blissful home. Thus engaged and thus domiciled, Longfellow worked happily till December, 1834. He was then offered the professorship of modern languages at Harvard. His salary was to be $1,500. At Bowdoin it had been but $1,000. Professors' salaries were not large in those days, but people lived simply. Harvard, at any rate, was the place where Longfellow felt that he ought to be. He gladly accepted the offer. It

had been provided, also, that if he chose he might first spend a year abroad. Longfellow's youthful ambition had been to be "eminent." His main desire now was to be "thorough." He felt that he needed a more intimate acquaintance with German thought and books. He also wished to master the Scandinavian languages. So he determined to avail himself of the chance of further study abroad which was now afforded him. Accordingly, he

LONGFELLOW'S BIRTHPLACE, PORTLAND, ME.

left for Europe a second time, in April, 1835, accompanied by his lovely and much-loved wife.

Longfellow's second visit to Europe lasted till December, 1836. The year and a half which it comprised proved to be the most fateful epoch of his life. He first spent a short holiday in London, where he saw a good deal of literary and artistic life, and a good deal, too, of what is called "the best society." Longfellow's manner, bearing, and appearance, supported as they were by position,

scholarship, and character, were an "open sesame" wherever he went. Dignified, polite, and courteous, accomplished in languages and literature, handsome and always well dressed, he was as typical a representative of what is best in American culture as ever went abroad. His London holiday was a continued round of gayety. When at last he broke away from it, he went to Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, where he spent six months acquiring the languages of these countries, and also Finnish. He then began a tour of Holland, but at Rotterdam his wife fell ill, and on the 29th of November she died there. Longfellow's nature was deep. Its agitations rarely showed themselves upon the surface. His reticence in grief was perhaps his strongest personal characteristic. Even with his closest friends he could not share his sorrow. But when, in 1839, he gave to the world his first book of poems, one beautiful and tender lyric, which could have come only from the heart, showed how the memory of his beloved wife ever remained with him as a dear and cherished spiritual presence:

"With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

"And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saintlike,
Looking downward from the skies."

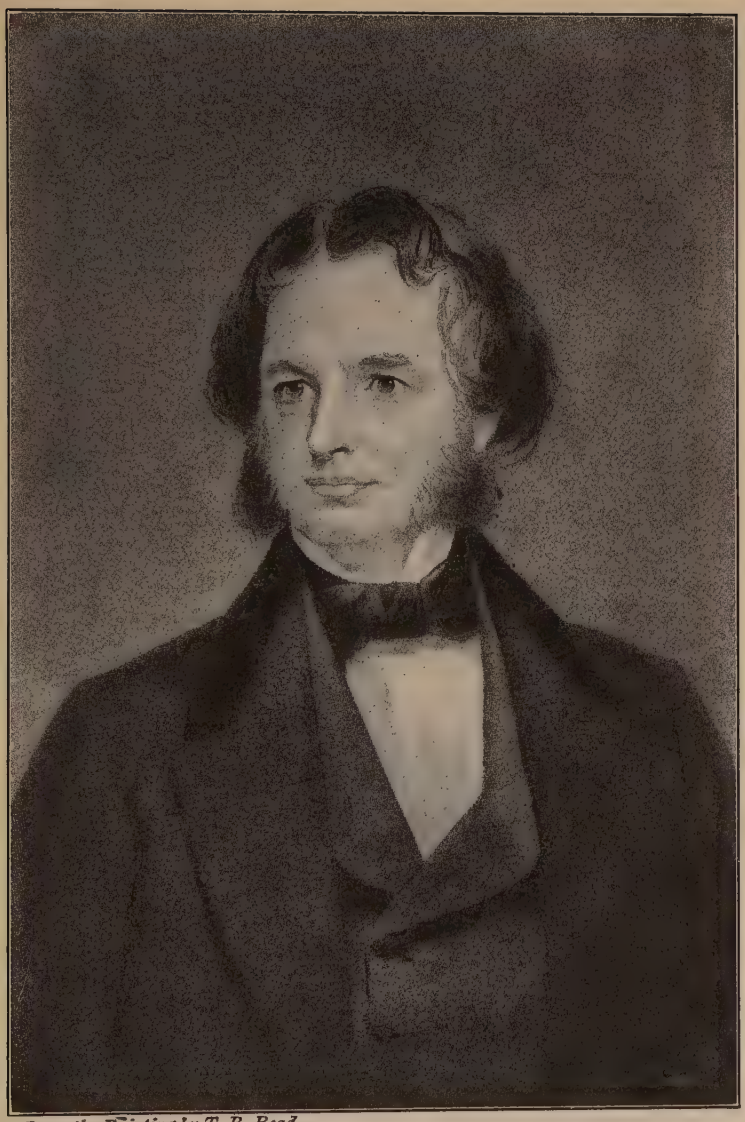
After his bereavement he went to Germany. His principal stay was at Heidelberg. There he made the ac-

quaintance of several German scholars of renown, and pursued diligently an earnest study of German literature. There, too, he first met his fellow-countryman, William Cullen Bryant, whose own splendid poetic genius had already won for the new world the honour of an old-world reputation. In the summer he went to the Tyrol and thence to Switzerland. It was while sojourning in these romantic regions that he made the acquaintance of the lady who became the heroine of his prose romance, "Hyperion," and who afterward became his second wife. In December he returned to America, and at once entered upon the duties of his new professorship.

Longfellow's literary work now began in earnest. His new professional duties did not tax his time and strength so heavily as they had been taxed at Bowdoin. Dr. Edward Everett Hale, who was one of his earlier students, thus describes Longfellow as professor: "His regular duty was the oversight of four or more instructors who were teaching French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, to two or three hundred undergraduates. We never knew when he might look in on a recitation and virtually conduct it. We were delighted to have him come. We all knew he was a poet and were proud to have him in the college." He gave his students a good deal of himself, and his lectures were full and covered a wide ground. But he allowed himself time for work of his own. One of his first employments was to write for the *North American Review* a generous critique of Hawthorne's "Twice-Told Tales." He had taken up his residence at Craigie House, once the headquarters of Wash-

ington. It was in Washington's own bed-chamber that his study was. He had choice friends: Felton, the professor of Greek; Sumner, then lecturer in the law school; Hillard, scholar and critic. To them he used to submit for criticism his poems before he gave them to the world. The first poem thus submitted was "Flowers." The next was the "Psalm of Life." These and others were given to the world anonymously—for the most part in *The Knickerbocker Magazine*. The "Psalm of Life," as soon as published, became at once a psalm of the people. It was said, it was sung, everywhere. His other poems were scarcely less popular. But, as yet, their author was anonymous. In 1839, however, he made a collection of what he thought were the best of his fugitive pieces, and published them in book form as "Voices of the Night" under his own name. He included also in this book a few of his early poems. The success of this, his first book of poems, was immediate and decisive. Longfellow was at once hailed the poet of the people.

Longfellow was loyally true to the memory of her who had been the chosen companion of his earlier years. A poet, however, is one that ever feels the need of direct and immediate love. Prosperous as Longfellow's life was, occupied wholly with his work and studies as he seemed to be, he was ill at ease, lonesome, and unhappy. In other words, he was heartsick. For a time he seemed to find contentment in the writing of "Hyperion." "Hyperion" is Longfellow's most ambitious prose work. It is ostensibly a romance—a novel. It is in reality a transcript of the novelist's own feelings and experiences dur-



From the Painting by T. B. Read.

Longfellow as a Young Man

ing a portion of his second tour in Europe. "Paul Flemming" is himself. "Mary Ashburton" was Miss Frances Appleton, the young lady whose acquaintance he had made in Switzerland. The book appeared in 1839. It was at once in great vogue. Its romanticism and its sentimentality charmed the readers of that age, both young and old alike. It became a sort of handbook for all English-reading travellers in Europe. Longfellow had not intended the correspondence between the ideal and the real to be noticed. But the world discovered it, and, for a time, the discovery caused embarrassment. Miss Appleton was everything that the novelist's fancy had painted his heroine to be. Though beautiful in form and face, with a beauty that was regal, the beauty and nobility of her mind and character were even yet more splendid. Longfellow, however, tested his heart well. He had met her as a radiant girl of nineteen. He waited seven years before he personally declared his love. By this time Miss Appleton had forgiven her public wooing. They were married in July, 1843. So long as she was spared to him no happiness could be more complete than theirs.

"Voices of the Night," published in 1839, had caused Longfellow to be hailed "the poet of the people." His next volume of poems, published in 1841, still more firmly established his claim to that title. It consisted principally of ballads and similar compositions, and contained such favourites (as we now know them) as "The Skeleton in Armour," "The Wreck of the Hesperus," "The Village Blacksmith," and "Excelsior." "The Wreck of the Hesperus" is, without doubt, the most widely read ballad ever

written in America. "Excelsior" has proved to be one of the most popular poems ever written anywhere, although critics are not wanting who deny it merit. Oliver Wendell Holmes, however, thought so well of it as to call it Longfellow's greatest poem. "The Village Blacksmith" commemorated a "village smithy" that once stood in

An Early Portrait of Longfellow.

Cambridge, not far from Longfellow's own house. When, in course of time, the smithy had to be taken away, there was made out of the timber of "the spreading chestnut tree" that shaded it a chair that was presented to the poet by "the village children," and the present was one he greatly valued, for Longfellow loved children. In 1842 he published his "Poems on Slavery." These he wrote on shipboard on his return from a short visit to Europe,

whither he had gone for rest in the summer of that year. In 1846 was published "The Spanish Student," Longfellow's first long poem. In it is that most popular of musical serenades, "Stars of the Summer Night." No poet that ever lived, not even Tennyson, has been more popular with musicians than Longfellow has been. The list of his poems that have been set to music is a very long one. In the very next volume of poems that he published, "The Belfry of Bruges" (1846), were several poems that musicians have vied with one another in furnishing with appropriate musical settings. Among these are "The Bridge," "The Day is Done," "The Old Clock on the Stairs," and "The Arrow and the Song," lyrics that are popular in every land where the English language is spoken or sung.

When Longfellow married Miss Appleton her father bought Craigie House and the whole of its estate and made them over to the poet and his wife as a wedding present. From that time forward Longfellow's mind was wholly at ease in regard to money matters. Craigie House, the house that once had been occupied by Washington, thereupon continued to be his home, and it remained his home as long as he lived. He loved it with a love that was almost pathetic.

"Once, ah, once, within these walls,
One whom memory oft recalls,
The Father of his Country dwelt.
And yonder meadows, broad and damp,
The fires of the besieging camp
Encircled with a burning belt.

Up and down these echoing stairs,
Heavy with the weight of cares,
Sounded his majestic tread;
Yes, within this very room,
Sat he in those hours of gloom,
Weary both in heart and head."

At Craigie House one day Hawthorne was a guest. Hawthorne had brought a friend, and this friend told Longfellow the story that proved to be the germ of "Evangeline." He had wished Hawthorne to make it the subject of a tale or romance. Hawthorne felt no interest in it. Longfellow begged that he might be allowed to use it for a poem. This request was readily granted, and Longfellow immediately set to work upon what turned out to be the great achievement of his life. He wrote the poem in hexameters, the metre that Goethe had been so successful with in "Hermann and Dorothea." His friends, including his wife, were doubtful about the use of the hexameter, but Longfellow's own judgment in all such matters was unerring. The metre was practically unknown in English, but that fact only served to make the beauty of the poem all the more striking. "Evangeline" was published in 1847, when the poet was just forty years old. Its success, according to its publishers, was "immediate and prodigious." Thirty-seven thousand copies of it were sold in ten years.

Longfellow's position in the world of literature was now a glorious one. He was already the greatest and most popular poet that America had ever produced. He was also the most popular poet that England had ever known.

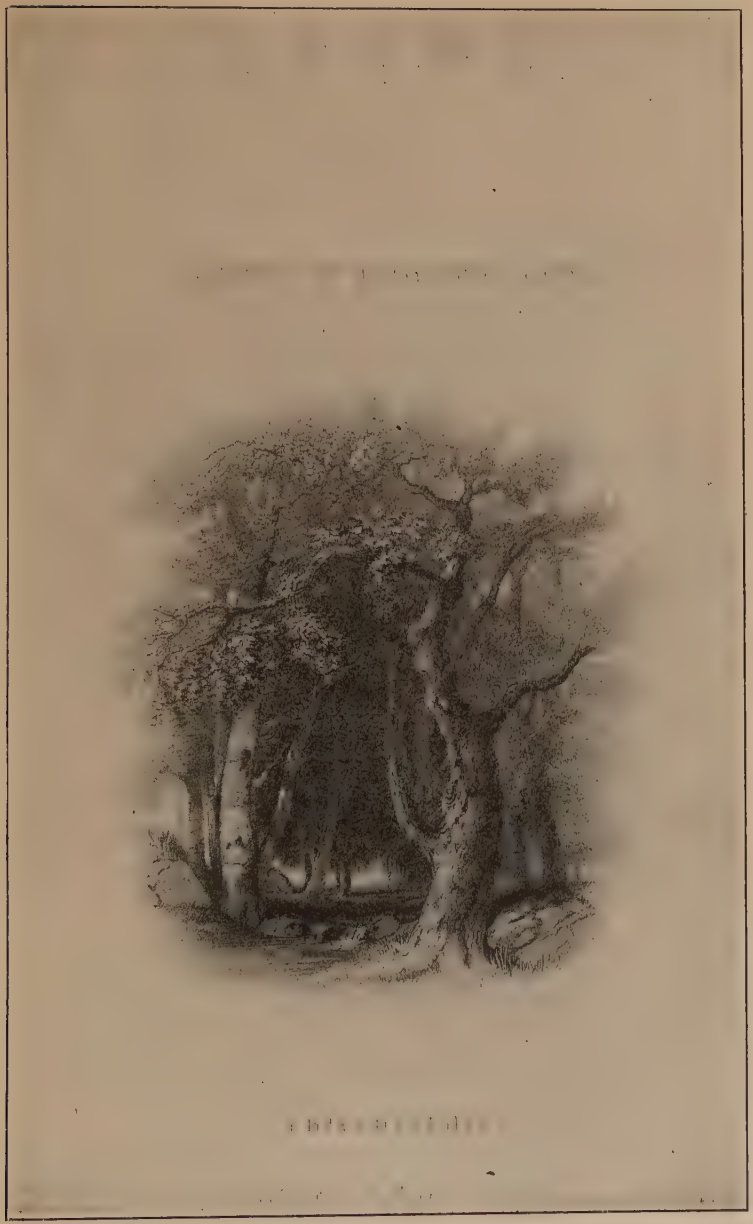
LONGFELLOW'S HOME (THE CRAIGIE HOUSE), CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

His " poems " in the old land were " as leaves on the trees, as pebbles on the shore." Thirty thousand copies of his works were sold there annually. But almost every year he continued to add to the volume of his production—new poems that amply sustained his fame, even if they could not enhance it. In 1850 he published " The Seaside and the Fireside," a collection of twenty-three poems that contained among others " The Building of the Ship," " Resignation," " The Fire of Driftwood," and " The Builders." " The Fireside " denoted the poems written in his home at Craigie House, in Cambridge; " The Seaside " denoted those written in his summer home at Nahant. " The Building of the Ship " is constructed somewhat on the model of Schiller's " Lay of the Bell." It is, perhaps, the patriotic young American's most popular piece for recitation. In 1851 was published " The Golden Legend," a beautiful homily on duty and unselfishness—one of Longfellow's masterpieces, less popular than others of his masterpieces only because its colour and texture are foreign and mediæval, rather than local and modern. In 1855 appeared " Hiawatha," the most striking and most original of all his works, if not the most beautiful or the most interesting. It has the merit, too, of being almost the only poem which has taken the Indian for its subject that has proved to be a literary success. The success of " Hiawatha " was indeed remarkable. One hundred thousand copies of it were sold in two years. In 1858 appeared " The Courtship of Miles Standish," of all Longfellow's longer poems the one that is most distinctively and most delightfully American. Poems similarly Amer-

ican in character, but more sombre in tone, are "The New England Tragedies," published ten years later. In 1858 also appeared "Birds of Passage—Flight the First," containing twenty-two poems, among them "The Ladder of St. Augustine," "Haunted Houses," "Two Angels," and "My Lost Youth." In 1863 appeared the first part of "Tales of a Wayside Inn," and among them that glorious bit of Americanism, "Paul Revere's Ride." The second and third parts did not appear until 1872 and 1874. In 1863 also appeared "Birds of Passage—Flight the Second," and in it that inimitable home poem, "The Children's Hour," the "children" being his own. Other collections of poems during his later years were "Flower de Luce" (1867); "Aftermath" (1874); "The Masque of Pandora" (containing "The Hanging of the Crane," written in honour of the marriage of his friend, T. B. Aldrich) (1875); "Keramos" (1878), and "Ultima Thule" (1880). "Ultima Thule" was inscribed to his earliest friend, George Washington Greene. Greene had been Longfellow's travelling companion in his first tour in Europe, over half a century before. The poem pathetically refers to that pause in the voyage of the soul which the poet felt that he would fain make before passing into the ocean of the unknown beyond.

> "Ultima Thule! Utmost Isle!
> Here in thy harbours for awhile
> We lower our sails; awhile we rest
> From the unending, endless quest."

Longfellow's literary accomplishment other than his original poems was considerable and noteworthy. Be-



Title Page of an Early Edition of Longfellow's Poems.

sides "Outre Mer" and "Hyperion" he wrote one other prose romance, entitled "Kavanagh" (1849), a picture of New England village life. He was also the editor of two important collections of poems, "The Poets and Poetry of Europe" (1845), and "Poems of Places" (thirty-one volumes—1876-79). But his most important work, other than his own poems, was his translations. In scholarship, in feeling, in sympathy, and in taste, as well as in surpassing poetical genius, Longfellow had the utmost measure of qualification for conveying into English the poetic thoughts and images of every modern literary foreign language. Translations from the French, the Italian, the Spanish, the German, and the Swedish and Danish, constitute a long list in his complete collection of shorter poems; while his translation of the "Divina Commedia," Dante's great work, is so notable a masterpiece that, Italian scholars being judges, the meaning of the original poem has been conveyed into English as accurately and exactly, word for word and sentence for sentence, as if Dante had written the original poem in English, and, English critics being judges, the poetic structure and splendour of the translation are such that in itself it deserves to rank as a great original poem.

Longfellow was married July 13, 1843. In 1861, almost on the very anniversary of his marriage, his wife was burned to death before his eyes. She had been amusing her children by making impressions in sealing-wax. A lighted drop of wax, falling into her lap, had set fire to her dress, and before her husband could extinguish it the injury was mortal. To Longfellow the shock was almost

mortal also. But he bore his grief with an almost defiant fortitude, and scarcely ever allowed an allusion to it to pass his lips. At the time of the tragedy he was but fifty-four years old. Age, however, now came upon him quickly; and had it not been for the resoluteness of his will his best work had been over. As it was, there is a noticeable sadness, or rather a lack of buoyancy, in the bulk of his later work which in his earlier work is not at all observable. His old friends, too, one by one were passing away before him. Hawthorne was one of the first to go. Agassiz followed not long after. Sumner and Felton also had gone. He commemorated them in his verse, but he missed them in his life. He had long since (1854) retired from active work in Harvard, so that, when he was not engaged in poetical composition, time pressed heavily upon him. In 1868 and 1869 he took a European tour that for a while preoccupied his thoughts entirely. He was entertained with proud enthusiasm everywhere. Cambridge honoured him with her LL.D., Oxford with her D.C.L. Gladstone sounded his praises and proposed his health at a great public dinner; Queen Victoria honoured him with a personal private invitation. But he wearied of his popularity and grew restless "to be home again." When he had come home he was then restless because he had done so. After he had finished his "Dante" (1870) he was more ill at ease than ever. "The work of translating," wrote Oliver Wendell Holmes (in April of that year), "kept him easy. He is restless now for want of a task. For him to be idle is to be the prey of sad memories." Finally illness came to occupy his

thoughts; and then pain of a severer sort. He suffered, too, from dizziness and want of strength. But neither pain of heart nor pain of body could lessen the sunny geniality of his temper or the courteous kindness of his disposition. He still continued to receive all visitors and to answer all correspondence—personally—with the uncomplaining punctiliousness which had always characterised him. Finally, however, early in 1882, a change for the worse became sadly apparent. He lingered on, however, but sinking steadily, till March 24. Then in Mount Auburn Cemetery, near the graves of "the noble three"—Agassiz, Sumner, and Felton—the cherished friends of his later years, his own grave was made.

TEN-MINUTE TALKS.

I.

By Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

In passing last year by the gate of Craigie House in Cambridge—that large house which was Washington's headquarters during the siege of Boston, and was afterward the residence of Longfellow—I met a young man who was asking some bystanders where to find the "spreading chestnut tree" where Longfellow's "village blacksmith" once lived and worked. Informing him that the tree was gone, but that I could show him where it once stood, I led him along the street to the spot, telling him as we walked that the actual name of the village blacksmith was Dexter Pratt, and that the wife mentioned in the poem was Rowena Pratt, my nurse in childhood. He in return told me that he had only just landed from Ireland, that the poem in question was the first he had ever learned at school, and that the scene of the poem was the very first place his footsteps had sought on arrival in America.

This, thought I, is genuine fame; to make out of the

LONGFELLOW AT 53.

simple scenes and personages of everyday life a picture which so touches the universal heart of man that although an ocean may roll between the poet and his reader they yet love the very places he has mentioned. No English-speaking man except Shakespeare, Scott, and Burns ever produced this impression more widely than did Longfellow. Almost every day in summer one may see strangers stopping at the gate of Craigie House and looking inward; people follow the famous ride of Paul Revere with Longfellow's poem in hand; no one visits Grand Pré or the falls of Minnehaha without quoting him; and I once bought at Heidelberg a little German edition of "Hyperion," sold as a guide-book to the place. His poems have been translated into more languages—probably fifteen in all—than those of all other American poets together, and no American prose writer has rivalled him in this respect except Mrs. Stowe. This is a genuine and desirable fame. Whether it is necessarily the final and absolute test of fame we cannot tell; for this reward is a plant of slow growth, and it takes centuries to judge of it; but it is the most enjoyable kind of fame, and one peculiarly appropriate to the modest, kindly nature of this poet.

Besides his literary work he did, until 1854, the duties of his professorship, although these became in time very irksome, and he often laments in his diaries over their fatiguing character. But he left a delightful impression on his pupils, as I can testify, and carried them beyond their technical studies into the real spirit of the French and Italian literatures. He had also the great merit, then less common than now, of a perfect courtesy of manner,

being probably the first teacher in Harvard University to introduce the practice, now general, of addressing the students as "Mr." The influence of this, and of the spirit which prompted it, was so great, that at an incipient rebellion about 1841, when a crowd of students had gathered in the college yard in the evening and had refused to listen to any other professor, there was a general hush when he spoke, and a voice cried: "We will hear Professor Longfellow; he always treats us like gentlemen." In this, as in all ways, he left a priceless combination of high intellectual service with a beautiful human character. His self-control and generosity of spirit were so great that he never had an enemy; even the jealous and vindictive Poe while defaming him could not pick a quarrel with him.

II.

By Henry Johnson, Ph.D.,

Longfellow Professor of Modern Languages, Bowdoin College

Longfellow merits special consideration as a scholarly poet of great breadth of knowledge and attainment. His attitude of mind toward the productions of other poets was, through his entire career, that of a respectful, appreciative student. His undergraduate life at Bowdoin had been marked by a fond interest in Horace, some of whose poems he had translated with notable success. His studies in Europe, by way of preparation for his in-

tended life-work as professor of modern languages, were literary rather than linguistic. The range of his studies betokens by its breadth an eager sympathy with widely separated peoples and ideals. How few modern students could range with profit over a continent, visiting and studying the peoples and literatures of the Scandinavian countries, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, France, Spain, and Italy!

Owing to an original sanity of judgment, a pure taste, and a rare assimilative power, Longfellow's individuality seems to have suffered no loss, though both his prose and verse of that period took the colour of the romantic surroundings in which he moved. He put the world of letters under contribution while he himself remained aloof. This mark of genius was certainly his, the inability to lose his personal dignified isolation, no matter how intimate and familiar the subject of his verse. It was easy for him to impart of himself, while it was impossible for him to allow the world to approach too near. The effort at self-confession, which exhausts natures no less poetically endowed than his, was never a part of his life's struggle. The old world was for him rich in storehouses abounding in wealth. What the race had already accomplished in realisation of its ideals of character was to him more attractive than its wealth in works of art. There is an atmosphere of victory already won about his collective work which reflects even in his poems of struggle the mastery which he himself had attained.

The selection of European poets represented in "Poets and Poetry of Europe," with its supplement, is extremely

hospitable, well deserving the title of collection which the poet himself judged properly to belong to it. Aside from its considerable intrinsic value, it is especially significant in a study of Longfellow as an index of his cosmopolitan taste. As proof of mere diligence it is far from contemptible, with its list of over four hundred poets, Longfellow himself contributing translations from eight foreign languages. The chronological list of his poems shows constant interest in the work of translation throughout his life. The great success which the poet attained in translation is due in part at least to his fidelity to himself. To him translating was an exercise of the whole being, of the soul and heart, not less than of the mind.

Passing to the greatest accomplishment of Longfellow's scholarly career, the translation of "The Divine Comedy," we find him for nearly twenty-four years in the maturity of his powers the companion of the stern Florentine. It is only after examining the notes and literary illustrations appended by him to his translation that we come to understand Longfellow's erudition. The translation itself shows in every line the simplest and greatest deference to his original author, and at the same time a resolute, worshipful entering into his meaning. What a scholar's paradise was that Wednesday evening symposium of the three friends, Professors Longfellow, Lowell, and Norton, held in the poet's study, to discuss Dante word by word!

Longfellow's use of the foreign suggestion is always happy, but nowhere more successful than in a poem which in its nature would seem to be born of his own contem-

plation—namely, "The Old Clock on the Stairs." Without specific attention called to it the poet's indebtedness for the familiar refrain to Bridaine, the old French missionary, would never have been suspected by the reader.

BRIEF CRITICAL STUDY.

By Harriet L. Mason, A.M.,

Professor of English Literature, Drexel Institute, Philadelphia.

In 1825 there was no American poet. Indeed, Washington Irving was the only prose writer who had made any European reputation. What wonder, then, that Longfellow, the young Bowdoin student, felt that there was room for an ambitious American man of letters? He felt that poetry, after the English style, of skylarks and nightingales, unknown to the natives, would not do. Yet he felt that before the new world could be worthily original she must saturate herself with the originality of the old. So to acquire the culture of Europe he went forth from his own land, impressionable, high-minded, pure in aspiration; and then returned after nearly six years' study, the first to bring the scholarship of Europe to the new world and make it live there. And, naturally enough, the earlier poems of Longfellow show this influence of scholarship in that they are translations from the German, the Spanish, the Danish, the Anglo-Saxon—or else, sad in tendency, owing to German mode of thought. But in his "Psalm of Life" bitter melancholy is left behind, and

the gladness of living well is the voice of hopeful, healthful young America. And this poem went straight to the hearts of the people. So, too, "Footsteps of Angels," touching upon sacred domestic chords, found quick response.

He next turned to the ballad form, and no man knew better than he that this is one form of poetry in which popular taste is unerring. A good ballad is adopted by a nation, and "The Wreck of the Hesperus" caught the rough imagination of the people. In it there is strong motive, swift action, and imaginative diction—all to prove his birthright as a poet. And "The Skeleton in Armour," with its splendid lyric swing, held the vigour and fire, the metre itself, of the old Norse songs that the original discoverers of America must have often chanted. More than any other modern English author Longfellow reproduced the old-time magic and spirit of the folk-song. But his poems on slavery, which followed soon after, showed that, though carefully polished, they were treated with too much artistic coolness to be the powerful weapon for the cause which his friends had expected. It was the verse of Whittier and Lowell that helped the slave to freedom. Longfellow's temperament was not heroic, though his quickest sympathies were for good—and he lost an opportunity.

But Longfellow was profiting by the frank criticism given him by Margaret Fuller in the *Dial*. She had called his poems exotic flowers with no smell of American soil about them, and in his poem "Evangeline" he aimed at an idyl that should have the colour and atmosphere of

historic America. In selecting the unrhymed hexameter lines for "Evangeline" he made a bold experiment, but his success was wonderful. The truth is, this metre carries the ear back unconsciously to the times in the world's history when great simplicities were sung and it helps us to picture this lovely legend, this "virgin-like pastoral." He said: "'Evangeline' is so easy for you to read, because it is so hard for me to write." And this is his representative work—his masterpiece. It is a gallery of pictures; the forest primeval that opens and closes the poem; the mellow landscapes of quiet, peaceful Acadia; detailed interiors, with Evangeline seated at her father's side; then the almshouse in Philadelphia, sketched from the Pennsylvania hospital, and at that gentle cry, "Gabriel, oh, my beloved!" never was a more beautiful transition of pictures made than that Longfellow puts into the memory of the dying man:

"Then he beheld in a dream once more the home of his childhood—
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,
Village and mountain and woodlands, and, walking under their shadow,
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.
Tears came into his eyes; and, as slowly he lifted his eyelids,
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside."

In closing this story of chastened love and longing one feels like saying, in Longfellow's most tender line: "When it had passed it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music."

But, courageous as was the effort in "Evangeline,"

Longfellow was to make a more daring one. He had long felt that in the traditions of the American Indian there might be material enough for something original in literature. And in "Hiawatha" he strove to write an epic of the race of red men. This was a new theme, and it was necessary to get a form of verse that should be unusual and fresh, perfectly suited to his novel subject. This would win him half his battle. So he used the unrhymed trochaic, the same form of verse as that used by the Finns in their national epic. It was just the metre fitted to best express the wild Indian tales of forest and snow and wigwam. Hiawatha, like King Arthur, seeks to redeem his kingdom from savagery and to teach the blessings of peace. The nimble-footed Pau-puk-keewis, the gentle singer Chibiabos, Minnehaha, that fragrant woodland flower—what a wealth of imagery and scenery wholly Indian! This was truly a natural, unique poem—a most genuine addition to our native literature. It was the first successful treatment of Indian legends and it is likely to be the last.

Longfellow came further to identify himself as a national poet in "The Courtship of Miles Standish." Here the deeds and sufferings of the Plymouth colony are set forth. Though this poem does not contain the beauty of description nor the breadth of motive of "Evangeline," there again are those wonderful interiors; the puritan psalm book; the "Mayflower" setting sail, and Priscilla, a creation who does so much to give relief to that sombre life. Again, in "Paul Revere's Ride" he has given us a poem which is history for some centuries, and he secures

attention by description of the sights through which the rider sweeps. Nor should the ode "The Building of the Ship," filled with all the patriotism of a republic, be forgotten. Its varying effects by varying metre are well worth study. And besides all these poems which most completely identify Longfellow as an American poet there are numberless others which touch upon those simple affections and facts of ordinary homely life. Whether his subjects were unusual or ordinary he embellished them by his fancy with such a treasure of tender and beautiful sayings that in every civilised land his verses have become household favourites.

Longfellow is probably the most popular poet in England and America of this century. Though his verses do not come "from the heights" nor "out of the depths," they run along the melodious, even tenor that his fortunate life, his scholarly attainments, his gentle, happy heart created. And to have millions of lips repeating his songs is an immortality after a poet's own heart.

LONGFELLOW'S HOME.

By Sara A. Hamlin.

Some one has said that a man is known by the house in which he lives; and surely nothing could better express the free, hospitable nature of the poet Longfellow than the large, old-fashioned house, painted yellow and white, which stands far back from Brattle Street, Cambridge. It is built in colonial style, and dates from the days before the American Revolution. Here George Washington had his headquarters, and here lived the wealthy Andrew Craigie, who gave the old house its name. But it is for Longfellow's sake that strangers pause and look at the substantial old mansion. It is he who has stamped upon it his individuality, and it is as "Longfellow's home" that it will always be known.

The house looks out from behind a hedge of lilac bushes. These common flowers were very dear to the poet. "Now is the time to come to Cambridge," he used to say to his friends; "the lilacs are getting ready to receive you."

A sacred atmosphere pervades the house, and everything upon which the eye rests suggests the sweet, gentle spirit that once dwelt there. The old-fashioned clock,

which stands half-way up the broad, handsome staircase and ticks its

"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

the pleasant sitting-room, which contains as its chief treasure a beautiful bust of Mrs. Longfellow; the dining-room, with its rare old china and its lovely picture of Longfellow's daughters—

"Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair"—

the elegant drawing-room, containing the noble bust of the poet, a facsimile of the one in Westminster Abbey—all these recall the happy years when Longfellow and his "Mary Ashburton" lived their ideal life of perfect love.

But the study is the heart of the house, and in this room nothing has been changed since the dear master left it. There is his writing-table, covered with books, and his chair, pushed a little aside from it. A tall desk is at the window, where he used to stand and look over the marshes to his beloved Charles River.

The greatest treasure in the room is an ebony bookcase filled with Longfellow's works in the original manuscripts. On the wall are crayon likenesses of his best-loved friends, Hawthorne, Emerson, Felton, and Sumner, taken when they were in the flush of youth.

In front of the large fireplace is the "children's chair," made from the "spreading chestnut tree" and given to

LONGFELLOW'S STUDY.

him by the school children of Cambridge. This gift made him very happy and called forth the poem:

> "Am I a king, that I should call my own
> This splendid ebon throne?"

Beside it stands another chair, called "Charles Sumner's chair," and the sight of it recalls those evenings when the two friends sat till midnight by the glowing fire and held sweet converse together.

The study is full of beautiful things. From the orange tree in the window to Coleridge's inkstand everything is full of interest because Longfellow's hand has touched it.

Many precious associations linger about this room. It was here that "Evangeline" was written; here he met the "Dante Club" week after week; and it was here that he wrote those last words his dear hand ever penned:

> "Out of the shades of night
> The world moves into light;
> It is daybreak everywhere."

There is not one of our masters of song who has so touched the heart of the people as has Longfellow, or who is held by them in such affectionate remembrance. He is the poet of the fireside, and his songs are familiar to every household.

Longfellow's life has always seemed to me like a sweet, tuneful poem. His happy youth at Portland; the years abroad, so well spent in study and travel; his teaching at Bowdoin and Harvard, where he shaped so many young lives by his own manly example; his perfect married life

in the old Craigie House, which all too soon was darkened by that terrible tragedy which took from him his dearest earthly possession; and, finally, those last peaceful years, blessed by the love of children and friends—all these seem to me like the perfect stanzas of a noble poem—joyous in part and in part sad and pathetic—but all fitted into one harmonious and beautiful whole.

REMINISCENCES AND CRITICAL STUDIES

SELECTED.

LONGFELLOW AND HIS MOTHER.

LONGFELLOW was said to be very like his mother. His brother wrote of him: "From her must have come to Henry the imaginative and romantic side of his nature. She was fond of poetry and music, and in her youth, of dancing and social gayety. She was a lover of nature in all its aspects. She would sit by a window during a thunder-storm enjoying the excitement of its splendours. Her disposition, through all trials and sorrows, was always cheerful, with a gentle and tranquil fortitude." No words could describe her son's nature more nearly.—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS, *in "Longfellow, 1807-1882," in "Authors and Friends"* (Hou.).

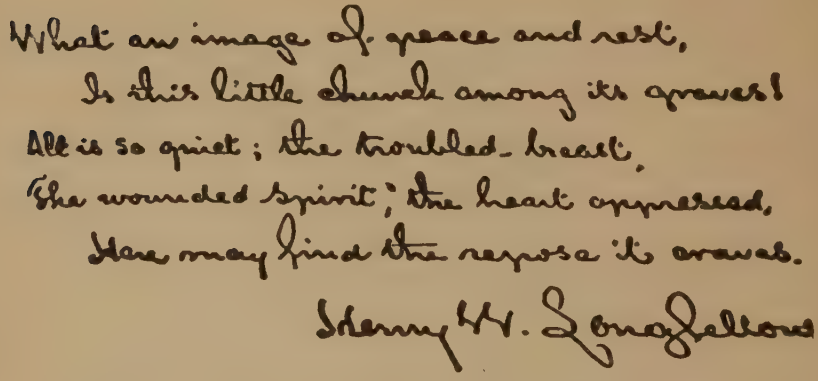
LONGFELLOW AS A CHILD.

The great sensitiveness of Longfellow's nature, one of the poetic qualities, was observed very early, and the description of him as a little boy was the description of the

heart and nature of the man. "Active, eager, impressionable; quick-tempered but as quickly appeased; kind-hearted and affectionate—the sunlight of the house." One day when a child of ten he came home with his eyes full of tears. His elder brother was fond of a gun, and had allowed Henry to borrow his. To the little boy's great distress he had aimed at and shot a robin. He never tried to use a gun again.—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS.

LONGFELLOW AND HAWTHORNE AS YOUTHS.

Of Longfellow's early years some anecdotes have been preserved in a private note-book which have not appeared



elsewhere; among them this bit of reminiscence from Hawthorne, who said, in speaking of his own early life and the days at Bowdoin College, where he and Longfellow were in the same class, that no two young men could have been more unlike. Longfellow, he explained,

was a tremendous student, and always carefully dressed, while he himself was extremely careless of his appearance, no student at all, and entirely incapable at that period of appreciating Longfellow.—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW AS A STUDENT AT BOWDOIN.

The class of 1825 became distinguished in the annals of Bowdoin for those of its graduates of that year who ultimately attained high rank in literature, theology, and politics.

One of the youngest members was Henry W. Longfellow, who entered college when only fourteen. He had decided personal beauty and most attractive manners. He was frank, courteous, and affable, while morally he was proof against the temptations that beset lads on first leaving the salutary restraints of home. He was diligent, conscientious, and most attentive to all his college duties, whether in the recitation-room, the lecture-hall, or the chapel. The word "student" best expresses his literary habit, and in his intercourse with all he was conspicuously the gentleman.

His studious habits and attractive mien soon led the professors to receive him into their society almost as an equal, rather than as a pupil; but this did not prevent him from being most popular among the students. He had no enemy.

Going forward for half a century after graduation, during which interval we met occasionally, but always cor-

dially, the semi-centennial celebration of our class occurred, when he pronounced his famous poem, "Morituri Salutamus." At that reunion Longfellow was the central figure by reason of his eminence as a poet and scholar, his great culture, and his charming manners. The promise of the boy was more than fulfilled in the mature man.—HORATIO BRIDGE, *in "Personal Recollections of Nathaniel Hawthorne"* (Har.).

LONGFELLOW'S GIFT FOR ACQUIRING AND REMEMBERING LANGUAGES.

From his early youth Longfellow was a scholar. Especially was his power of acquiring language most unusual. As his reputation widened he was led to observe this to be a gift as well as an acquirement. It gave him the convenient and agreeable power of entertaining foreigners who sought his society. He said one evening, late in life, that he could not help being struck with the little trouble it was to him to recall any language he had ever studied, even though he had not spoken it for years. He had found himself talking Spanish, for instance, with considerable ease a few days before. He said he could not recall having even read anything in Spanish for many years, and it was certainly thirty since he had given it any study. Also, it was the same with German. "I cannot imagine," he continued, "what it would be to take up a language and try to master it at this period of my life. I cannot remember how or when I learned any of them—to-night, I have been speaking German, without finding

the least difficulty."—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW AND HIS FRIENDS.

Upon his return home [from his second residence abroad] in December, 1836, Longfellow began his life in Cambridge among the group of men who became inseparable friends—Felton, Sumner, Hillard, and Cleaveland. They called themselves the "Five of Clubs," and saw each other continually. Later came Agassiz and a few others. How delightful the little suppers were of those days! He used to write: "We had a gaudiolem last night." When, several years after, he married Frances Appleton and began, as it were, "the new life," his wife wrote to Mr. Greene:[1] "Felton and the rest of the club flourish in immortal youth, and are often with us to dine or sup. I have never seen such a beautiful friendship between men of such distinct personalities, though closely linked together by mutual tastes and affections. They criticise and praise each other's performances, with a frankness not to be surpassed, and seem to have attained that happy height of faith where no misunderstanding, no jealousy, no reserve, exists."—Mrs. James T. Fields.

"THE MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETY."

Pleasantest and strongest, perhaps, of all Longfellow's friendships was that for Charles Sumner, who was lectur-

1 Longfellow's life-long friend, George Washington Greene, to whom he afterwards dedicated the collection of poems entitled "Ultima Thule."

ing at the law school when he first came to Cambridge. Begun when both were young men just launching forth on their great but so different careers, it continued until death separated them, without a shadow of estrangement or disloyalty, but with ever-increasing ardour of affection. Sumner was inclined to literature at that time, and indeed for many years afterward, his political career being rather forced upon him by the stormy times. A club was formed at this time called the "Five of Clubs," consisting of Longfellow, Sumner, Hillard, Cleaveland, and Felton. They read and criticised each other's writings and enjoyed a hearty social intercourse. Awhile afterward, when they began to speak well of each other's articles in the reviews, the newspapers gave them the name of the "Mutual Admiration Society." Not inapplicable, probably, but applicable to the literary men of all time. What is the great literary guild anywhere but a mutual admiration society?—HATTIE TYNG GRISWOLD, *in "Home Life of Great Authors"* (Mg.).

LONGFELLOW AND CRAIGIE HOUSE.

Longfellow early chose Craigie House as the most desirable place for his abode in all the world. The poems and journals are full of his enjoyment of nature as seen from its windows. In the beginning of his residence there he persuaded Mrs. Craigie to allow him to have two rooms; but he soon controlled the second floor, and at the time of his marriage to Miss Appleton her father presented them with the whole of the beautiful estate.—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS. (*Cf.* above.)

MRS. LONGFELLOW.

At Craigie House Longfellow's life took shape and his happiness found increase with the days. It was like him to say little in direct speech of all this; but we find a few words describing his wife, of whom his brother wrote that "her calm and quiet face wore habitually a look of seriousness." And then, evidently quoting from Henry, he adds, "at times it seemed to make the very air bright with its smiles." She was a beautiful woman of deep but reserved feeling and cultivated tastes and manners. She understood and sympathised in his work, and, even more, she became often its inspiration. During their wedding journey they passed through Springfield, whence she wrote: "In the Arsenal at Springfield we grew quite warlike against war, and I urged H. to write a peace poem."[1]—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS.

LONGFELLOW IN HIS OWN HOME.

Finally established in Craigie House, as the children grew and his library enlarged, and guests, attracted by personal love and by his fame, became more numerous,

[1] Charles Sumner was in the company of Mr. and Mrs. Longfellow during the visit. "While Mr. Sumner was endeavouring," writes Mr. Samuel Longfellow, "to impress upon the attendant that the money expended on these weapons of war would have been much better spent upon a great library, Mrs. Longfellow pleased her husband by remarking how like an organ looked the ranged and shining gun-barrels which covered the walls from floor to ceiling, and suggested what mournful music Death would bring from them." Some months later Longfellow wrote the poem, "The Arsenal at Springfield."

Longfellow found the days almost overburdened with responsibilities. Nevertheless, this was his chosen home, his house beautiful, and such he made it, not only to his own eyes, but to the eyes of all who frequented it. The atmosphere of the man pervaded his surroundings and threw a glamour over everything. Even those who were most intimate at Craigie House felt the indescribable influence of tenderness, sweetness, and calm which filled the place. Neither Longfellow nor his wife was a brilliant talker; indeed there were often periods of speechlessness; but in spite of mental absences, a habit of which he got the better in later years, one was always sure of being taken at one's best and of coming away with a sense of having "breathed a nobler air."—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW'S FONDNESS FOR THE OPERA AND THE THEATRE.

In spite of Longfellow's dislike of grand occasions where he was a prominent figure, he was a keen lover of the opera and the theatre. He was always the first to know when the opera season was to begin and to plan that our two houses might take a box together. He was always ready to hear "Lucia" or "Don Giovanni," and to make a festival time at the coming of Salvini or Neilson. He easily caught the gayety of such occasions, and in the shadow of the curtains in the box would join in the singing or the recitative of the lovely Italian words with a true poet's delight.—Mrs. James T. Fields.

LONGFELLOW'S PATIENT ENDURANCE OF INTERRUPTERS.

Day by day Longfellow was besieged by every possible form of interruption which the ingenuity of the human brain could devise; but his patience and kindness, his determination to accept the homage offered him in the spirit of the giver, whatever discomfort it might bring himself, was continually surprising to those who observed him year by year. Mr. Fields wrote: "In his modesty and benevolence I am reminded of what Pope said of his friend Garth: 'He is the best of Christians without knowing it.'"—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS.

LONGFELLOW'S INTEREST IN THOSE WHO PURSUED NOBLY.

Longfellow was distinguished by one grace which was almost peculiar to himself in the time in which he lived—his tenderness toward the undeveloped artist, the man or woman, youth or maid, whose heart was set upon some form of ideal expression, and who was living for that. Whether they possessed the power to distinguish themselves or not, to such persons he addressed himself with a sense of personal regard and kinship. When fame crowned the aspirant, no one recognised more keenly the perfection of the work, but he seldom turned aside to attract the successful to himself. To the unsuccessful he lent the sunshine and overflow of his own life, as if he tried to show every day afresh that he believed noble

pursuit and not attainment to be the purpose of our existence.—Mrs. James T. Fields.

LONGFELLOW'S GREAT CHANGE AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS SECOND WIFE.

In 1861 there is a note containing only a few words, which shows that a change had fallen upon Longfellow, a shadow which never could be lifted from his life. He writes:

"My dear Fields: I am sorry to say No instead of Yes; but so it must be. I can neither write nor think; and I have nothing fit to send you but my love, which you cannot put into the magazine."

For ever after the death of his wife he was a different man. His friends suffered for him and with him, but he walked alone through the valley of the shadow of death. The blow fell entirely without warning, and the burial took place upon the anniversary of her marriage day. Some hand placed on her beautiful head, lovely and unmarred in death, a wreath of orange blossoms.

There was a break in his journal at this time. After many days he inscribed in it the following lines from Tennyson's poem addressed to James Spedding:

"Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace.
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul!
While the stars burn, the moons increase,
And the great ages onward roll."

His friends were glad when he turned to his work again and still more glad when he showed a desire for their interest in what he was doing.—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW'S NEVER-CEASING COURTESY AND KINDNESS.

Longfellow lived in an interesting, historic house in a venerable university town, itself the suburb of a great city; the highway running by his gate and dividing the smooth grass and modest green terraces about the house from the fields and meadows that sloped gently to the placid Charles, and the low range of distant hills that made the horizon. Through the little gate passed an endless procession of pilgrims of every degree and from every country to pay homage to their American friend. Every morning came the letters of those who could not come in person, and with infinite urbanity and sympathy and patience the master of the house received them all, and his gracious hospitality but deepened the admiration and affection of the guests. His nearer friends sometimes remonstrated at his sweet courtesy to such annoying "devastators of the day." But to an urgent complaint of his endless favour to a flagrant offender, Longfellow only answered, good-humouredly: "If I did not speak kindly to him, there is not a man in the world who would." On the day that he was taken ill, six days only before his death, three schoolboys came out from Boston on their Saturday holiday to ask his autograph. The benign

lover of children welcomed them heartily, showed them a hundred interesting objects in his house, then wrote his name for them, and for the last time.—GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS, *in "Literary and Social Essays"* (Har.).

LONGFELLOW THE NATION'S REPRESENTATIVE POET.

For many years the most representative name in American poetry has been that of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Others have often rivalled or surpassed him in special successes or in peculiar fields. The poetry of Emerson displays a clearness of vision, a loftiness of plan, an optimistic philosophy, and a profundity of thought, to which Longfellow cannot wholly attain; but it is the splendid poetry of fragment and of swift utterance. Poe's peculiar domain Longfellow neither would enter, nor could enter with success. In some few respects Lowell displays powers—and not alone of wit—more significant than those of his friend and neighbour and collegiate predecessor. Such reflections as these, however, cannot profitably be followed far. All in all, Longfellow has been the nation's poet, and has been recognised as such in the other great Teutonic countries as well as in America. Furthermore, he has been deemed, by thousands, preëminently the poet of sympathy and sentiment, the laureate of the common human heart; yet none has been able to class him with the slender sentimentalists, or to deny to him the possession of artistic powers of somewhat unusual range and of unquestionable effectiveness. Longfellow has aroused affection on the one hand and

stimulated criticism on the other; the personality has hardly been forgotten in the product, and yet the work has made no claims not intrinsic. Like Whittier, Longfellow is beloved; like Emerson, he is honoured for his poetic evangel; and like Poe, he is studied as an artist in words and metrical effects.—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON *in "American Literature, 1607-1885"* (Put.).

LONGFELLOW'S GOOD FORTUNE AS A POET.

Poets, like the cicalas, have occasion to envy those who compass their song and sustenance together. Few can pledge with Longfellow their lives, or even frequent hours, to the labour they delight in. There was, in fact, an "opening"—a need for just the service he could render. The circumstances of his birth and training were propitious and worked to one end. Neither he nor Hawthorne was the mere offspring of an environment. There was nothing special in the little down-east school of Bowdoin sixty years ago to breed the leaders of our imaginative prose and verse. But the time was ripe; there was an unspoken demand for richer life and thought, to which such natures and the intellects of Channing and Emerson were sure to respond. And the concurrence certainly was special—that Longfellow, descended from pilgrim and puritan stock, the child of a cultured household, should be born, not only with a poet's voice and ear, but with an aptitude for letters amounting to a sixth sense—a bookishness assimilative as that of Hunt or Lamb; that he should be reared in a typical Eastern town, open alike to

polite influences and to the freshness and beauty of the northern sea; that such a youth, buoyant and manly, but averse to the coarser sports, gentle, pure—and one who in France would have become at first an abbé—should in New England be made a college professor at nineteen and commissioned to visit Europe and complete his studies; that ten years later, having ended the pleasant drudgery of his apprenticeship, he should find himself settled for life at Harvard, the centre of learning, and under few obligations that did not assist rather than impede his chosen ministry of song.—EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN, *in "American Poets"* (Hou.).

"VOICES OF THE NIGHT."

No volume of poems ever published in the country was so popular. Severe critics, indeed, while acknowledging its melody and charm, thought it too morally didactic, the work of a student too fondly enamoured of foreign literatures. But while they conceded taste and facility, two of the poems at least—the "Psalm of Life" and the "Footsteps of Angels"—penetrated the common heart at once, and have held it ever since. A young Scotchman saw them reprinted in some paper or magazine, and, meeting a literary lady in London, repeated them to her, and then to a literary assembly at her house; and the presence of a new poet was at once acknowledged. If the "Midnight Mass for the Dying Year" in its form and phrase and conception recalled a land of cathedrals and a historic religious ritual, and had but a vague and remote charm

for the woodman in the pine forests of Maine and the farmer on the Illinois prairie, yet the "Psalm of Life" was the very heartbeat of the American conscience, and the "Footsteps of Angels" was a hymn of the fond yearning of every loving heart.—GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW FOR FORTY YEARS THE HEAD OF AMERICAN SINGERS.

During the period of more than forty years from the publication of the "Voices of the Night" to his death, the fame of Longfellow constantly increased. It was not because his genius, like that of another scholarly poet, Gray, seldom blossomed in song, so that his renown rested upon a few gem-like verses. He was not intimidated by his own fame. During those forty years he wrote and published constantly. Other great fames arose around him. New poets began to sing. Popular historians took their places. But still with Bryant the name of Longfellow was always associated at the head of American singers, and far beyond that of any other American author was his name known through all the reading world.—GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

LONGFELLOW'S MINOR POEMS.

Each of Longfellow's minor poems is pervaded by one thought, and has that artistic unity which comes from the economic use of rich material. The "Hymn to the

Night," "A Psalm of Life," "Footsteps of Angels," "The Skeleton in Armour," "The Wreck of the Hesperus," "The Village Blacksmith," "Excelsior," "The Arsenal at Springfield," "Sea-Weed," "Resignation," and other of his minor poems, have found a lodgement in the memory of everybody, and it will be found that their charm consists in their unity as well as in their beauty, that they are as much poems, complete in themselves, as "Evangeline" or "Hiawatha." In "Maidenhood" and "Endymion," especially in the latter, the poet is revealed in all the exquisiteness, the delicacy, the refinement, of his imaginative faculty; but they are less popular than the poems previously mentioned, because they embody more subtle moods of the poetic mind.—EDWIN P. WHIPPLE, *in "American Literature"* (Hou.).

BRYANT, LONGFELLOW, AND THE NEW ENGLAND GROUP OF THE LAST GENERATION.

While the same moral tone in the poetry both of Bryant and of Longfellow shows them to be children of the same soil and tradition, and shows also that they saw plainly, what poets of the greatest genius have often not seen at all, that in the morality of human life lies its true beauty, the different aspect of puritan development which they displayed was due to difference of temperament and circumstance. The foundations of our distinctive literature were largely laid in New England, and they rest upon morality. Literary New England had never a trace of literary Bohemia. The most illustrious group, and the earliest, of American authors and scholars and literary

men, the Boston and Cambridge group of their generation—Channing, the two Danas, Sparks, Everett, Bancroft, Ticknor, Prescott, Norton, Ripley, Palfrey, Emerson, Parker, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, Agassiz, Lowell, Motley—have been all sober and industrious citizens of whom Judge Sewall would have approved. Their lives as well as their works have ennobled literature. They have illustrated the moral sanity of genius.—GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW THE SINGER MOST WIDELY BELOVED.

It is the moral purity of Longfellow's verse which at once charms the heart, and in his first most famous poem, the "Psalm of Life," it is the direct inculcation of a moral purpose. Those who insist that literary art, like all other art, should not concern itself positively with morality, must reflect that the heart of this age has been touched as truly by Longfellow, however differently, as that of any time by its master-poet. This, indeed, is his peculiar distinction. Among the great poetic names of the century in English literature, Burns, in a general way, is the poet of love; Wordsworth, of lofty contemplation of nature; Byron, of passion; Shelley, of aspiration; Keats, of romance; Scott, of heroic legend; and not less, and quite as distinctively, Longfellow, of the domestic affections. He is the poet of the household, of the fireside, of the universal home feeling. The infinite tenderness and patience, the pathos, and the beauty of daily life, of familiar emotion, and the common scene, these are the significance of that verse whose beautiful and simple melody,

softly murmuring for more than forty years, made the singer the most widely beloved of living men.—GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

LONGFELLOW THE POET OF THE SIMPLE AFFECTIONS.

Longfellow's genius was not a great creative force. It burst into no tempests of mighty passion. It did not wrestle with the haughtily veiled problems of fate and free-will absolute. It had no dramatic movement and variety, no eccentricity and grotesqueness and unexpectedness. It was not Lear, nor Faust, nor Manfred, nor Romeo. A carnation is not a passion-flower. Indeed, no poet of so universal and sincere a popularity ever sang so little of love as a passion. None of his smaller poems are love poems; and "Evangeline" is a tale, not of fiery romance, but of affection "that hopes and endures and is patient," of the unwasting "beauty and strength of woman's devotion," of the constantly tried and tested virtue that makes up the happiness of daily life. No one has described so well as Longfellow himself the character and influence of his own poetry:

"Come read to me some poem,
Some simple and heart-felt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

"Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

. . . . . .

"Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer."

This was the office of Longfellow in literature, and how perfectly it was fulfilled!—GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW THE POET OF CHILDHOOD AND OF THE POOR AND LOWLY.

Like Victor Hugo in France, Longfellow in America was the poet of childhood. And as he understood the children so he also sympathised with the poor, the toiling, the lowly—not looking down on them, but glorifying their labour, and declaring the necessity of it and the nobility of work. He could make the barest life seem radiant with beauty. He had acquired the culture of all lands, but he understood also the message of his own country. He thought that the best that Europe could bring was none too good for the plain people of America. He was a true American, not only in his stalwart patriotism in the hour of trial, but in his loving acceptance of the doctrine of human equality and in his belief and trust in his fellowman.—PROF. BRANDER MATTHEWS.

THE SINGING SIMPLICITY OF LONGFELLOW'S LYRICS.

Longfellow is the most popular poet yet born in America; and if we can measure popular approval by the wide-

spread sale of his successive volumes he was probably the most popular poet of the English language of this century. Part of his popularity is due to his healthy mind, his calm spirit, his vigorous sympathy. His thought, though often deep, was never obscure. His lyrics had always a grace that took the ear with delight. They have a singing simplicity, caught, it may be, from the German lyrists Uhland or Heine. This simplicity was the result of rare artistic repression; it was not due to any poverty of intellect.—PROF. BRANDER MATTHEWS, *in "An Introduction to American Literature"* (Am.).

"APPLES OF GOLD IN PICTURES OF SILVER."

It is the fidelity of his genius to itself, the universal feeling to which he gives expression, and the perfection of his literary workmanship, which is sure to give Longfellow a permanent place in literature. His poems are apples of gold in pictures of silver. There is nothing in them excessive, nothing overwrought, nothing strained into turgidity, obscurity, and nonsense. There is sometimes, indeed, a fine stateliness, as in the "Arsenal at Springfield," and even a resounding splendour of diction, as in "Sandalphon." But when the melody is most delicate it is simple. The poet throws nothing into the mist to make it large. How purely melodious his verse can be without losing the thought or its most transparent expression is seen in "The Evening Star" and "Snow-Flakes."—GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS. (*Cf.* above.)

IN LONGFELLOW THE MAN AND THE POET INDISSOLUBLY BLENDED.

In no other conspicuous figure in literary history are the man and the poet more indissolubly blended than in Longfellow. The poet was the man, and the man the poet. What he was to the stranger reading in distant lands, by

"The long wash of Australasian seas,"

that he was to the most intimate of his friends. His life and character were perfectly reflected in his books. There is no purity or grace or feeling or spotless charm

LONGFELLOW'S STUDY, CRAIGIE HOUSE.

in his verse which did not belong to the man. There was never an explanation to be offered for him; no allowance was necessary for the eccentricity or grotesqueness or wilfulness or humour of genius. Simple, modest, frank, manly, he was the good citizen, the self-respecting gentleman, the symmetrical man.—GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW'S HUMAN HEART AND POETIC ART.

Bayard Taylor, who was certainly neither a bigot nor a platitudinarian, once wrote to Longfellow: "I know not who else before you has so wonderfully wedded Poetry and the Religious Sentiment. . . ." Taylor's remark, as generally applicable to a large part of Longfellow's work, is both apt and just. Once when Lowell had become discouraged over the task of preparing a new edition of his own verse, he happened to take up a similar edition of Longfellow, "to see the type." "Before I knew it," he wrote to the elder poet, "I had been reading two hours and more. I never wondered at your popularity, nor thought it wicked in you; but if I had wondered, I should no longer, for you sang me out of all my worries." Longfellow sang poets as well as seamstresses and shopkeepers out of all their worries; and the simple reason was that his heart was human and his art was poetic.—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW'S POETIC POWER MAINTAINED TO THE END.

In 1863, when he published the first part of the "Tales of a Wayside Inn," Longfellow had reached a critical point in the career of a successful author. He was fifty-six years old; his reputation was firmly established, both upon his subjective lyrics and upon "Evangeline" and "Hiawatha"; and the usual question arose, in the minds of his readers, whether that reputation was to be increased, maintained, or impaired in the latter years of his life. New methods and forces in English verse were beginning to appear or to attract the public: Browning, Arnold, and the young pre-Raphaelite poets in England, and Whitman and the western or ultra "American" singers in the United States. The reputation of Emerson, too, was steadily and surely advancing to a point from which it was not to recede; Poe was gaining in foreign renown with the passing years; Whittier and some lesser lyrists were rivalling the Cambridge bard in their poems of the war; and Lowell, in his later work, was displaying somewhat of the depth of Emerson and the musical flow of the verse of his neighbour and friend. On the whole, during the two remaining decades of Longfellow's life there was the maintenance of a reputation already won, and not its substantial increase or evident diminution. Accurately measuring his powers, he continued to write admirable short poems of thought, sentiment, or suggestion, which, though not rivalling the popularity of his earlier poems, aroused no feeling of

disappointment and no special complaint of inadequacy. —Prof. Charles F. Richardson. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW'S LONG POEMS, PROSE WORKS, AND "DANTE."

In his long poems, such as "Evangeline," "The Golden Legend," "Hiawatha," "The Courtship of Miles Standish," "The New England Tragedies," Longfellow never repeats himself. He occupies a new domain of poetry with each successive poem, and always gives the public the delightful shock of a new surprise. In his prose works, "Outre-Mer," "Hyperion," and "Kavanagh," he is the same man as in his verse—ever sweet, tender, thoughtful, weighty, vigorous, imaginative, and humane. His great translation of Dante is not the least of his claims to the gratitude of his countrymen.—Edwin P. Whipple. (*Cf.* above.)

"EVANGELINE."

When "Evangeline" appeared, in 1847, Longfellow was already the most widely known of our poets. Had there been any doubt as to Longfellow's primacy it was removed by the instant fame of this widely discussed and oft-read book. The theme, at once idyllic and tragical, and the much debated measure (unrhymed hexameter) were alike attractive. Many to whom poetry was unfamiliar became interested in the sad lives and loves of the banished Acadian girl and her lost betrothed, who met at last as tender, helpful nun and dying stranger.

While the critics and rhymesters were discussing the metre, thousands of readers were sharing the sentiments of Dr. Holmes, who wrote to the poet: "The story is beautiful in conception as in execution. I read it as I should have listened to some exquisite symphony, and closed the last leaf, leaving a little mark upon it which told a great deal more than all the ink I could waste upon the note you have just finished."—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW A PECULIARLY AMERICAN POET.

We have, in "The Courtship of Miles Standish," another proof of the breadth of range and achievement in which Longfellow surpassed all other American poets, and in which he was approached by Lowell only, at a considerable distance. Our chief representative of continental culture was also a peculiarly American poet, even aside from his masterpiece, "Hiawatha," the most American poem of all.—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON.

"HIAWATHA."

"Hiawatha" possesses the poetic merits of imagination, descriptive power, native originality, and broad interest; and so, fortunately, it is able to take care of its own place in literature. It is a book that seems to its present readers to miss greatness; but it is quite possible that the time will come when, his other writings forgotten or ignored, the name of Longfellow will be chiefly known

as that of the author of "Hiawatha."—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON.

LONGFELLOW THE ST. JOHN OF OUR AMERICAN APOSTLES OF SONG.

In estimating the life-work of Longfellow as a poet, the personality and the product cannot be separated. The sweet and sympathetic and strong and self-reliant soul, so fully portrayed in the three-volume life by the poet's brother, ever animates the verse. Longfellow looked out upon life and sang his thoughts concerning its joys and its mysteries. His lyrics and idyls and dramatic studies and reflective poems illuminate with catholic sympathy and quiet optimism the procession of human existence: childhood, youth with its loves and hopes, middle-life with its bereavements and struggles, age with its wasting and weariness and patiently continued work, death as the transition to another stage of progress and experience. His poems lack not thought, nor feeling, nor art, but well combine the three. What he misses in intellectual greatness he possesses in heartfulness. He was the St. John of our American apostles of song. His word was spoken to those who work and win, struggle and lose, love and bury.—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW'S SURPASSING POPULARITY AS A POET.

I remember how instantaneously in the year 1839 the "Voices of the Night" sped triumphantly on its way. At

present Longfellow's currency in Europe is almost unparalleled. Twenty-four publishing houses in England have issued the whole or a part of his works. Many of his poems have been translated into Russian and Hebrew. "Evangeline" has been translated three times into German, and "Hiawatha" has not only gone into nearly all the modern languages, but can now be read in Latin. I have seen translations of all Longfellow's principal works, in prose and poetry, in French, Italian, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish, and Danish. The Emperor of Brazil has himself translated and published "Robert of Sicily," one of the poems in "Tales of a Wayside Inn," into his native tongue, and in China they use a fan which has become immensely popular on account of the "Psalm of Life" being printed on it in the language of the Celestial Empire. Professor Kneeland, who went to the national millennial celebration in Iceland, told me that when he was leaving that far-away land, on the verge almost of the Arctic Circle, the people said to him: "Tell Longfellow that we love him; tell him that we read and rejoice in his poems; tell him that Iceland knows him by heart." To-day there is no disputing the fact that Longfellow is more popular than any other living poet; that his books are more widely circulated, command greater attention, and bring more copyright money than those of any other author, not excepting Tennyson, now writing English verse.—JAMES T. FIELDS. *Quoted by Mrs. James T. Fields, in "Authors and Friends"* (Hou.).

LONGFELLOW'S IMMORTALITY SECURE.

In this country, by general consent, Longfellow is a pervading, purifying, beneficent agency. He is hardly less extensively read in England, where his death was pronounced a national loss. It is doubtful whether any singer of this generation has so wide a circle of present admirers. But we remember the most popular are not always the most enduring. Many who once stirred the hearts and touched the fancies of a day have disappeared in the night or are names only. Others who were disparaged in their own age have made the earth wholesome in a succeeding one, and men have travelled into foreign parts to find their works. The veneration of mankind has selected for the highest place one whom the influential of the contemporary world despised or ignored, if they knew him at all. The sentiments common to races and centuries are the most likely to live. Building upon these with consummate art, Longfellow has qualities which guarantee him against oblivion. His immortality is secure in the bosoms of the bereaved, the tired, the lonely, the desponding, the aspiring, the struggling.—A. H. WELSH, *in "The Development of English Language and Literature"* (Scott).

SOME LITERARY QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

By Harriet L. Mason,

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QUERIES.

1. What was the life motto of Longfellow as found in some miscellaneous notes of his?

2. What was Longfellow's demeanour toward his students at Harvard?

3. After the tragic death by fire of his wife to what occupation did Longfellow turn as solace?

4. What public memorials are there to Longfellow?

5. What appellation has been given to Longfellow from the fact that he is the most popular of American poets?

6. What poem of Longfellow's was never paid for by the magazine which Published it, and afterward, during the siege of Paris, saved a Frenchman from committing suicide?

7. What poem of Longfellow's contains exquisite descriptions of a country the poet had never seen?

8. What poem of Longfellow's may be ranked with such productions as the Anglo-Saxon epic of "Beowulf," or the old French song of "Roland"?

9. What poem did Longfellow rise in the middle of the night to write and finish in less than an hour?

10. What work of Longfellow's is modelled after the plan of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales"?

11. What other famous rides in literature does "Paul Revere's Ride" suggest?

12. What poem of Longfellow's furnished the title for Beatrice Harraden's popular story, "Ships that Pass in the Night"?

13. What poem of Longfellow's recalls a famous painting of the artist Gérôme?

14. What poem of Longfellow's did the *New York Ledger* pay $4,000 for, merely for the privilege of publishing it first, exclusive of the right to its publication in book form? This was at the rate of twenty dollars per line.

15. What is the rank of Longfellow's translation of Dante?

16. What remarkable evidence of the poet's kindness and patience is found in his private diary?

17. What great teacher sat down one day in Longfellow's study and wept like a child because he had lost the power to work?

18. What were the last lines Longfellow penned?

19. How was Longfellow once honoured by the public schools of the United States?

20. What lines from the poet's own poem were chanted as Longfellow's requiem?

ANSWERS.

1. "An early sorrow is often the truest benediction"—quoted from Irving, who largely influenced Longfellow.

2. Always courteous. "Let's hear Professor Longfellow, for he always treats us as gentlemen," was exclaimed at a time of uprising among the students.

3. To his translation of Dante's "Divine Comedy." In the same way Bryant turned to the translation of Homer's "Iliad" after the death of his wife.

4. (1) A monument in Portland. (2) A bust in Westminster Abbey (Longfellow is the first American so honoured). (3) The Longfellow Park in Cambridge, just opposite Craigie House and commanding his favourite view of the river Charles.

5. "Leader of the American Choir."

6. The "Psalm of Life."

7. "Evangeline." Longfellow never was in Nova Scotia. A similar instance might be noted: Scott's famous lines to Melrose Abbey were written before he had visited it.

8. "Hiawatha," which is destined to give to coming generations their idea of the race of red men.

9. "The Wreck of the Hesperus." Longfellow received twenty-five dollars for the poem.

10. The "Tales of a Wayside Inn." The Red Horse Inn at Sudbury, Massachusetts, twenty-three miles from Boston, which Longfellow describes, is still standing.

11. Browning's "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix"; Read's "Sheridan's Ride"; Whittier's "Skipper Ireson's Ride."

12. "Elizabeth." See the first verse of Canto IV.

13. "Morituri Salutamus"—"We who are about to die salute you"—written for the jubilee reunion of Bowdoin's class of 1825.

14. "The Hanging of the Crane," called forth by a visit of the poet to T. B. Aldrich and his newly married wife.

15. It is a literal and lineal rendering, placing it, on the whole, at the head of English translations. Longfellow's notes are invaluable.

16. "Yesterday [June 9, 1857] I wrote, sealed, and directed seventy autographs. One letter I shall not answer: 'Now, I want you to write me a few lines for a young lady's album, to be written in an acrostic to read "My Dearest One." P. S.—Send bill.'"

17. Agassiz. He rallied afterward for a little, but soon died.

18. "Out of the shadow of night
The world rolls into light.
It is daybreak everywhere."

19. His seventy-fifth birthday was celebrated by all the schools in the country.

20. "He is dead, the sweet musician,
He the sweetest of all singers;
He has gone from us forever;
He has moved a little nearer
To the Master of all music."

—"*Hiawatha.*"

READERS' AND STUDENTS' NOTES.

1. Very few Americans will be satisfied with knowing less of Longfellow than almost all he has written. He possesses the rare distinction among poets of having written very little that does not appeal to the popular heart and satisfy the popular taste. Every one, therefore, will desire to possess a "complete edition" of his poems. These are published only by the owners of the copyrights, Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston. Of the "Complete Poetical Works" there are several editions: the "Cambridge" at $2.00, with "Notes," "Biographical Sketch," full indexes, etc., being specially to be commended. The same publishers publish also complete editions of Longfellow's prose works, and many beautiful editions—all of them excellent—at various prices, of individual poems and works.

2. Of the "early poems," and other poems whose copyright privileges have elapsed, such as "Hiawatha" and "Evangeline," very many editions are published by numerous publishers, some very beautiful and excellent. Among these may be mentioned some of the editions published by T. Y. Crowell & Co., such as the "Faïence."

3. Young people beginning their study of literature may rightfully enough think that they should read a poet such as Longfellow only in selections. The following list is made up with the needs of such students in view. It embraces what may be called, on the whole, the most interesting, the most popular, and the

most characteristic of Longfellow's poems. A student becoming familiar with the poems in this list may fairly claim to have obtained what may be called a good representative knowledge of the poet. But very many poems not included in the list will be found quite as well worth study as some of those included. The list is made up in groups whose significance is obvious. The arrangement in each group is as far as possible chronological. [NOTE.—The more noteworthy poems, the poems that for one reason or another the student should not by any means miss, are marked with a star (*).]

I. SHORTER POEMS.—(1) * "A Psalm of Life," (2) * "Footsteps of Angels," (3) "Flowers," (4) "The Goblet of Life," (5) "The Arsenal at Springfield," (6) * "Rain in Summer," (7) * "To a Child," (8) * "Resignation," (9) * "The Builders," (10) * "The Ladder of St. Augustine," (11) * "Haunted Houses," (12) * "The Two Angels," (13) * "The Rope Walk," (14) * "Children," (15) * "The Children's Hour," (16) * "Something Left Undone," (17) "Flower-de-Luce," (18) "Killed at the Ford," (19) "The Haunted Chamber," (20) "The Castle Builder," (21) "The Chamber Over the Gate," (22) "The Sifting of Peter," (23) "Victor and Vanquished," (24) "My Books."

II. SONGS AND LYRICS.—(1) * "The Reaper and the Flowers," (2) * "The Village Blacksmith," (3) * "The Rainy Day," (4) * "Maidenhood," (5) * "Excelsior," (6) * "The Bridge," (7) * "The Day is Done," (8) * "The Old Clock on the Stairs," (9) * "The Arrow and the Song."

III. BALLADS.—(1) "The Skeleton in Armour," (2) * "The Wreck of the Hesperus," (3) "Sir Humphrey Gilbert," (4) "The Ballad of Carmilhan."

IV. LONGER POEMS.—(1) * "Evangeline," (2) * "The Building of the Ship," (3) "The Golden Legend," (4) * "The Courtship of Miles Standish," (5) * "Paul Revere's Ride," (6) "The Falcon of Sir Federigo," (7) "King Robert of Sicily," (8) "The Birds of Killingworth," (9) "The Bell of Atri," (10) "Lady Wentworth," (11) "The Legend Beautiful," (12) "Elizabeth,"

(13) "The Rhyme of Sir Christopher," (14) * "The Hanging of the Crane," (15) "The Divine Tragedy," (16) "Morituri Salutamus" ("We who are about to die salute you"), (17) "Kéramos."

To the above perhaps should be added "The Song of Hiawatha." Parts of "Hiawatha" are among the most beautiful things Longfellow ever wrote. If only selections of "Hiawatha" can be read, the following are recommended; namely, Cantos III., VII., X., XV., XX.

4. Some of Longfellow's most notable work consisted of poems written in honour of his friends. Among these poems are the following: (1) "The Fiftieth Birthday of Agassiz," (2) "Hawthorne, May 23, 1864," (3) "In the Churchyard at Tarrytown" (in honour of Irving), (4) "Wapentake" (in honour of Tennyson), (5) "The Three Silences" (in honour of Whittier), (6) "Charles Sumner," (7) "The Herons of Elmwood" (in honour of Lowell), (8) "Bayard Taylor." To this class of poems belong the magnificent poem, "Robert Burns," and the sonnet on "President Garfield."

5. Not a few of Longfellow's poems have a biographical significance. These significances are generally explained in the "introductions" to the individual poems now to be found in all good editions of the complete poems. Among these "biographical" poems are the following: (1) "The Courtship of Miles Standish" (Longfellow was descended through his mother from the "John Alden" and the "Priscilla" of the poem); (2) "A Psalm of Life"; (3) "Footsteps of Angels" (several stanzas in this poem refer to the poet's first wife); (4) "The Old Clock on the Stairs"; (5) "To the River Charles"; (6) "A Gleam of Sunshine"; (7) "The Two Angels" (this poem, we are told, was written on "the birth of my younger daughter and the death of the young and beautiful wife of my neighbour and friend, the poet Lowell"); (8) "My Lost Youth"; (9) "The Children's Hour"; (10) "Three Friends of Mine" (the friends are Prof. Cornelius Conway Felton, celebrated for his Greek scholar-

ship, Professor Agassiz, and Charles Sumner); (11) "Morituri Salutamus" (this poem was written for the fiftieth anniversary of the class of 1825 in Bowdoin College); (12) "From my Arm Chair" (this poem was written for the children of Cambridge, who, on the poet's seventy-second birthday, presented him with a chair made from the wood of the "village blacksmith's" "spreading chestnut tree"); (13) "The Dedication" to "Ultima Thule" (this poem was inscribed to "G. W. G.," the letters standing for the initials of Longfellow's life-long friend, George Washington Greene).

6. Longfellow's poems on slavery, though they had not the burning heat of Whittier's productions, nevertheless exercised their share of effect on the growing sentiment of the nation in favour of freedom. Their simple pathos won a way to the hearts of the people when oftentimes a fiercer burst of wrath or indignation was repelled or listened to unheeded. The most noted are: (1) "The Slave's Dream," (2) "The Slave in the Dismal Swamp," (3) "The Slave Singing at Midnight," and (4) "The Quadroon Girl."

7. Longfellow's place in literature as a prose writer is not a great one, but it is a sure one. Two of his prose works, "Outre-Mer" and "Hyperion," the one published when he was a young man of twenty-eight years of age, the other when he was but thirty-two, were in their day as popular as Irving's "Sketch Book," and even yet are important as indicating what were the literary sympathies of the age when they were written. "Hyperion" is indeed a classic, and so also may almost be said to be "Outre-Mer."

(8) The student (as distinct from the general reader) will find the editions of Longfellow contained in the "Riverside School Library" series (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), with "notes," "maps," "introductions," "illustrations," etc., such as will be exceedingly helpful to him. There are three volumes in the set, each 60 cents.

9. The student (as distinct from the general reader) will also

find William C. Gannett's "Studies in Longfellow" of excellent service to him. These "studies" consist of "Outlines and Topics for Study," with "Questions and References." Professor Pattee says of this book: "It is well-nigh indispensable as a guide to an intelligent class-room study of the poet's work." (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 15 cents—being No. 12 of the "Riverside Literature Series." The same book contains "Studies" in Whittier, Holmes, and Lowell as well).

10. Longfellow's life is not necessary to the understanding of his poetry, but, as in the case of Emerson, it is exceedingly helpful to the understanding of it. The poet's life was in every way just such as his poetry would seem to indicate that it should be. Certainly no life ever lived by a man of letters was more charming or intrinsically more noble or more beautiful. The standard biography of Longfellow is that by the poet's brother, the Rev. Samuel Longfellow, published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. (Boston: 3 vols., incorporating the matter formerly included in the supplementary volume, entitled "Final Memorials." $6.00.) The great interest of this work lies in the rich extracts it makes from Longfellow's letters and journals—especially from his journals. We have thus the poet's revelation of himself; and also—which is exceedingly interesting—the poet's views and opinions of his own work.

11. For the student, the best "Life of Longfellow" is Prof. Eric S. Robertson's in the "Great Writers" series. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $1.00.) This work—as is the case with all the works of this series—has an excellent bibliography.

12. Other accounts and sketches of Longfellow will be found as follows:

(1) "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a Biographical Sketch," with portraits, illustrations, facsimiles, and bibliography, by Francis H. Underwood, LL.D. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.50.)

(2) "H. W. Longfellow: Biography, Anecdote, Letters, Criticism," by W. Sloane Kennedy. (Boston: D. Lothrop Company.)

(3) "Longfellow, 1807-1882," in "Authors and Friends," by Annie (Mrs. James T.) Fields. (This work also contains reminiscent accounts of Emerson, Whittier, and Holmes—the whole constituting an especially delightful series of biographical sketches of four of our principal authors.) (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.50.)

(4) "Longfellow" in "Little Journeys to the Homes of American Authors." (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $1.75.) The paper on Longfellow is by George William Curtis, by whom also are the papers on Emerson and Hawthorne.

(5) "Longfellow" in "Home Life of Great Authors," by Hattie Tyng Griswold. (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. $1.50.) In this work also are papers on Irving, Poe, Bryant, Hawthorne, Emerson, Whittier, Holmes, and Lowell.

(6) "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow," by Richard Henry Stoddard, in *Scribner's Magazine*, September, 1878.

(7) "The Death of Longfellow," by Walt Whitman, in *The Critic*, April 8, 1882.

13. Critical estimates of Longfellow's work, of easy availability, may be found as follows:

(1) In Prof. Charles F. Richardson's excellent "American Literature, 1607-1885," vol. ii. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 2 vols., $6.00; or 2 vols. in one, $3.50.)

(2) In E. C. Stedman's "Poets of America." (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $2.25.)

(3) In E. P. Whipple's "Essays and Reviews," vol. i. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 2 vols., $3.00.)

(4) In Horace E. Scudder's "Men and Letters"; chapter i., "Longfellow and his Art." (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.25.)

(5) In George William Curtis' "Literary and Social Essays" (with papers also on Emerson, Hawthorne, Holmes, and Irving). (New York: Harper & Brothers. $2.50.)

(6) In Prof. C. C. Felton's review of "Evangeline," in the *North American Review*, January, 1848.

(7) In Edward Everett Hale's review of "The Song of Hiawatha," in the *North American Review*, January, 1856.

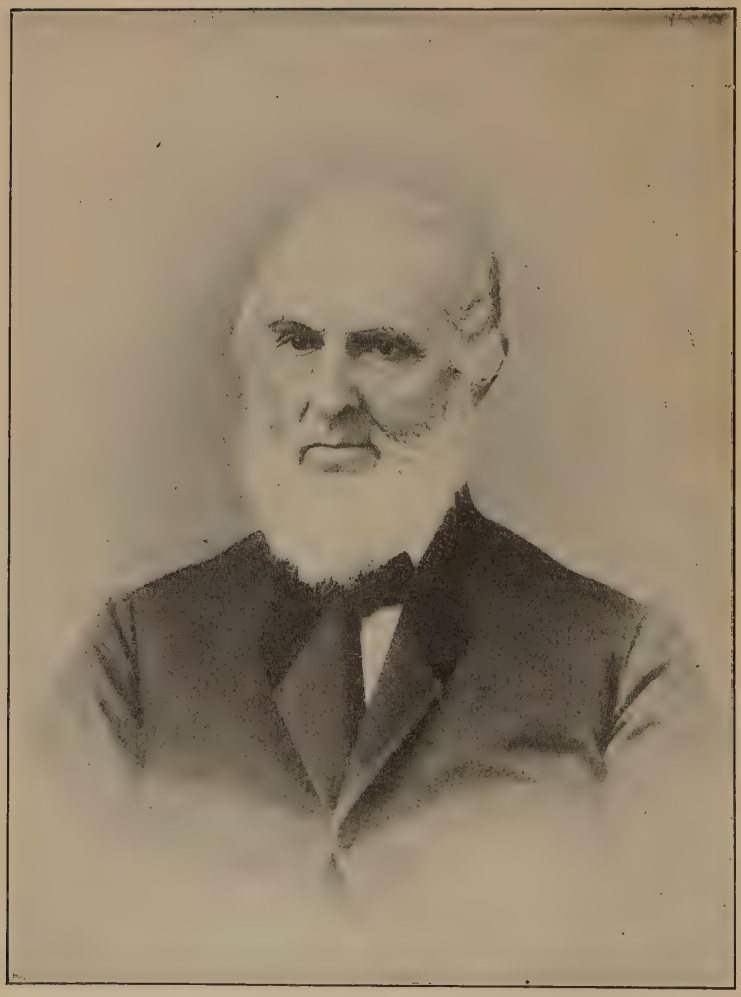
(8) In W. D. Howells' "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow," in the *North American Review*, April, 1867.

(9) In Anthony Trollope's "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow," in the *North American Review*, April, 1881.

(10) In Lyman Abbott's "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and His Work," in supplement to *The Christian Union*, February 23, 1881.

(11) In the "Longfellow Number" of the *Literary World*, February 26, 1881.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.



John Greenleaf Whittier

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

1807—1892.

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY.

By John Ebenezer Bryant.

Whittier, for thirty years the poet-militant of freedom, was, for thirty other years, freedom's triumphant poet-laureate. In the bede-roll of the world's famous authors he is now the honoured and revered poet of the home affections, the poet of rural life and pursuits, the poet of New England scenery and traditions, the poet of the gospel of the universal brotherhood of man and the universal fatherhood of God.

Whittier owed little to art or culture. His poems were the direct and unadorned utterances of his heart. His simple naturalness, however, was more effective in its power to touch and to inspire than any art could be. No poet was ever more effective in his moral teaching. And yet no poet ever made less use of the teacher's formal didactic methods. Simple, artless, earnest, sincere, dealing mainly in legend, incident, and historic event and

scene, he conveys the moral import of his theme to the hearts of his readers without effort, and apparently without intention. A perfect story-teller, he neither explains nor exhorts—he merely relates; but the directness of his story goes straight home, and his simple narratives become immortal. It is only when on the great topic that absorbed the enthusiasm of his life that he is distinctly lyrical or epic; he has then the fire, the energy, and the insight, of a prophet.

Whittier can scarcely be called a great poet. His genius was not creative. Neither was it masterful. But he had a clear discernment of the iniquity of wrong, and the righteousness of truth and justice, and this discernment gave definiteness and direction to all his effort. Although he called some of his poems subjective they were rarely such. He was always the recorder of what he saw, either with his natural or with his spiritual eye. His poetical canvas is instinct with human life. But he portrayed men and women as existing in a world where right and wrong are contending elements; and, believing that the right should be approved and the wrong condemned, he set the actors of his poems in their proper moral relations. Hence his poems became great moral object lessons. There was never any need for him to point his moral. It stood forth, as it were, a spiritual illumination, in every line he wrote.

Whittier was not a scholar in the ordinary sense of the word. His only education was that of a primary country school, with two terms additional, when he had arrived at manhood's years, in a village academy, where he

WHITTIER'S HOUSE AT AMESBURY.

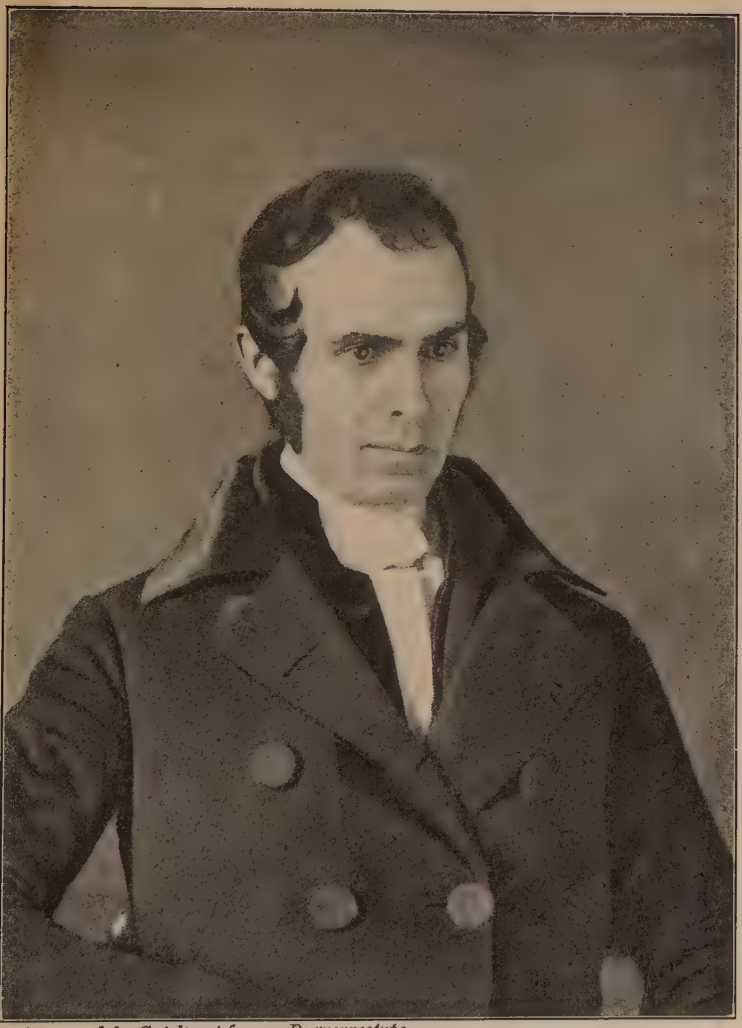
learned a little Latin. Nor did his reading in after years ever give him the scholar's tastes, or the scholar's social affinities. He was essentially a man of practical ideas and sympathies. He read much and widely, and he seems to have been a rapid reader. But his reading, as was natural, principally lay in those fields of practical effort in which he took most sympathetic interest. The histories of struggles for liberty, the biographies of political and social reformers, the chronicles of the early martyrs for freedom of thought in New England, the lives of religious teachers whose gospel was real benevolence and not controversy—these all were of the keenest interest to him. And he read, also, much in poetry and in belles-lettres, especially when, in later life, he came to be recognised by the world as a writer of poetry himself. Of English poets he was fondest of Burns and Milton and Shakespeare. Of English novelists he was fondest of Dickens and Scott. And he kept himself quite intimate with the works of all contemporary poets and novelists, especially those of his own country, not a few of whom were among his closest personal friends. Yet, despite all this, he could scarcely be called a scholarly reader or a scholarly writer; and he made no claim to these titles. He often lamented the want of a thorough education in his youth; and he seems never to have been quite sure of his grammatical constructions or metrical harmonies. But his innate good sense, his real ability, and the simplicity and directness of his habitual methods of expression, made up for all his lack of early training; and, though critics have found fault with his rhymes, and

grammarians have, in some instances, condemned the construction of his sentences, it is only such consummate artists as Tennyson, and Longfellow, and Matthew Arnold, that stand above him in lucidity and exactness of expression; while, in those remissnesses for which he is censured, he is far superior to such cultured artists as Mrs. Browning and Lord Byron. His principal drawback was that his faculty for rhymed expression was altogether too facile. He composed too easily. And though he published much, especially in early life, that he afterward refused to include in his authorised works, and though what he finally published was subject to constant amendment and improvement so long as it remained in hand unprinted, yet poetical composition never seems to have been difficult to him. It was only necessary for a theme to come into his head for it at once to be given rhymed and rhythmical expression. He himself, for a long time, never attached great importance to his writings, and always spoke of them as "rhymes." And he seems always to have been greatly surprised when he found that his poems became popular. But as years went on, and fame came to him though he had not sought it, he grew at last to have a fuller belief in himself, and to take the utmost care with his work, and to be anxious to turn it out, not only effective as to poetical power, but free from fault as to grammar and prosody. For many years during the latter portion of his life his friend and publisher, Mr. James T. Fields, was the one who finally passed judgment on his poetical compositions, and to Mr. Fields' suggestions and criticisms he always paid the most

respectful attention. But he deeply regretted his own want of perfect artistic execution. Tennyson's skill as a literary artist was always a matter of praise with him. One of the most pathetic things recorded of him was his ejaculation: "Tennyson has written another perfect poem. Oh, if I could only write a perfect poem like Tennyson!"

Whittier was almost a lifelong invalid. Though born of a sturdy and long-lived stock, he inherited no great robustness of frame, and when he was about seventeen years of age he injured his constitution permanently by overwork on his father's farm. He had a weakness of the heart that not only gave him pain, but for many years was a constant menace to his life. He also suffered incessantly from sleeplessness. He sometimes passed five days without sleeping. but his principal ailments were severe and exhausting headaches that would be brought on by the slightest exertion, whether of reading, or writing, or talking. In consequence of all these physical disabilities his life, for almost fifty years, was practically that of a recluse. When visitors came to him he would have to slip away from them, even after a half-hour's conversation, in order that he might recover his strength. For many years he never attended a public lecture, even in his own village, and even when given by one of his own special friends. When Dickens came to Boston, although he longed passionately to hear him read, and actually went to the city for that purpose, yet at the very last he had to give his purpose up. This constitutional nervous weakness, together with his inborn reserve, developed in him a shyness that was proof against almost

all public manifestations of honour. When his "Hymn" was to be sung at the opening of the centennial exhibition in Philadelphia, it would have given delight to thousands had he been present in person. But on no account would he allow himself to form a part of a public gathering where any public duty, no matter how slight, would be expected of him. When his friend, Charles Sumner, died, he would not even consent to go to his funeral, although it was to be conducted most privately, except upon the express stipulation that when there he was not to be asked to utter a word. Even when his own seventieth birthday was celebrated by a banquet given in his honour by the publishers of the *Atlantic Monthly*, a banquet that was attended by the very flower of the nation's literati, it was with the greatest difficulty that he was persuaded to attend. And yet in private life, especially at home, he was not in the least shy, although even in his own home, or in the homes of his friends, he was slow to talk, and given rather to listen than to be listened to. He used himself to tell a story amusingly illustrative of this last characteristic. He once called on Hawthorne. Hawthorne received him with a "Good morning" and asked him to be seated. The two world-famous writers then sat down and looked at each other for some time in silence. "The cold chills crept down my back," Whittier used to say, "for thee knows I am not skilled in visits and small talk. After a moment or two I got up and said: 'I think I will take a short walk.' So I took my walk and returned and bade him good morning—much to my relief, and, I have no doubt, much to his." Of course, this anecdote il-



Photograph by Gutekunst from a Daguerreotype.

Whittier in Middle Age

lustrates Hawthorne's idiosyncrasy rather than Whittier's; but Whittier was not a talker except in the company of those whom he felt to be in sympathy with him.

Whittier, though he now stands before the world as a poet, and a poet only, gave to poetry, during many years of his life, only his secondary thoughts, only the odd moments of his time and the dregs of his energy. He began life as a newspaper writer and editor, and soon became a politician. For some years to be a successful politician was his chief ambition. But in his twenty-seventh year a great change came over him. He ceased to be the mere party politician that he had been, and became a politician with a great moral purpose. He consecrated himself, his life, his political talent, his editorial talent, and his poetical talent, all to the cause of anti-slavery. But the experience he had already gained in political work stood in good stead to him. In fact, Whittier's genius for practical politics was consummate; and had he had the strength to devote himself to political life, probably none of his contemporaries would more effectively have influenced public opinion, or been more honoured as a leader. Even as it was, during the whole ante-rebellion period, from 1840 onward, nervous, insomnious, and unable to endure the slightest fatigue, he was yet able to keep his hand on the pulse of the nation, and constantly to influence, from his obscure village home, the actions of the leaders of all parties in the North, though of course, more especially, the leaders who were becoming year by year more and more to be in sympathy with his own view that slavery was a great national wrong

which the nation must remove. By letters, by interviews, by lobbying, by editorial writing, by pamphlets, by personal canvassing for petitions in his own district, by getting others to canvass for petitions in other districts, by personal influence with legislators of all ranks, and, of course, by his growing fame as a poet, he impressed his views upon the public mind, perhaps more continuously, and more effectively, than any other private person in the republic. He never rested. His watchfulness never slept. He was no less active in restraining and counterchecking the unwise enthusiasms of his own small band of partisans, than in taking advantage, for the sake of the cause, of mitigations that could be effected in the policies of the two great parties of the nation. His principle of action was to help forward every movement that bore toward the social and political freedom of the negro, no matter how indirect that movement might, for the time being, seem to be. He was thus able to see progress where other anti-slavery men saw only unrighteous compromise, and to effect progress where others were broken utterly in weak attempts against impregnable positions. As time wore on, although he grew weaker in health and strength year by year, his voice as a poet became stronger and clearer, his pen as an editorial writer more skilful and more effective, his advice as a wise and tactful counsellor more widely recognised and more warmly welcomed. So that by the time the war had broken out, there was no one in the whole nation whose words were more eagerly waited for, or more heedfully listened to, than his.

And never for a moment did Whittier fail in his fidelity to the cause to which he had set his heart from the very first. "If this war is not to put slavery down, it is the most ridiculous, the most unholy war that was ever entered upon." Early in the strife, in his apostrophe to Fremont upon his proclamation of freedom to the slaves of Missouri—a proclamation that was countermanded by the administration as premature—in words which found a response in every modern home that had poured of its treasure and of its blood to begin the awful conflict, he uttered the voice of destiny:

"Still take thou courage! God has spoken through thee,
Irrevocable the mighty words, Be free!
The land shakes with them, and the slave's dull ear
Turns from the rice-swamp, stealthily, to hear.
Who would recall them now must first arrest
The winds that blow down from the free northwest,
Ruffling the gulf; or, like a scroll, roll back
The Mississippi to its upper springs.
Such words fulfill their prophecy, and lack
But the full time to harden into things."

And later, in that hymn, "A Strong Fortress Is Our God"—which the earlier generals of the war condemned as incendiary and would not let their soldiers hear, but which Lincoln, with fateful prescience, knew expressed the awful fact, and ordered that his soldiers should hear—in words that again burned in upon the hearts of the people, he gave utterance to the fearful truth that slavery alone was the cause of the war, and that its destruction

could be effected only by the purgation of the nation with fire and sword.

"We wait beneath the furnace blast
The pangs of transformation;
Not painlessly doth God recast,
And mould anew, the nation.
Hot burns the fire,
Where wrongs expire;
Nor spares the hand
That from the land
Uproots the ancient evil."

But when in February, 1865, the constitutional amendment was passed, and slavery was at last abolished, Whittier, who had for over thirty years struggled for that end, broke out in a poem of praise. Noble and strong as this song ("Laus Deo") is, one of the strongest and noblest songs of victory that poet ever sung, it may well be believed that it but feebly expressed the overflowing emotions of his heart:

"It is done!
Clang of bell and roar of gun
Send the tidings up and down.
How the belfries rock and reel!
How the great guns, peal on peal,
Fling the joy from town to town!"

. . . . . .

"Let us kneel:
God's own voice is in that peal,
And this spot is holy ground.
Lord forgive us! What are we,
That our eyes this glory see,
That our ears have heard the sound!"

. . . . . .

" Did we dare,
In our agony of prayer,
Ask for more than He has done?
When was ever His right hand
Over any time or land
Stretched as now beneath the sun? "

Whittier's interest in practical politics largely subsided as soon as slavery was abolished, and the negro had been granted the right of suffrage. But never, to the end of his days, was he an indifferent spectator of what was being done in the great councils of the nation. His policy was always for conciliation and reconciliation. The mistakes of political friends he would have forgiven. The inflamed animosities of political opponents he would have forgotten. To the impoverished people of the South he wished the North to show the practical sympathy of fellow-citizens and brothers. To the conquered leaders of the South he wished the nation to grant an amnesty so generous that it would effect complete political regeneration. The broken and wounded commonwealth he would heal and bind together again so effectually that it would be more united than ever. But he exercised his influence toward these beneficent ends indirectly rather than directly. It was by means of counsels given to those who were actively engaged in the work of reconstructing the nation, and not by poems and editorials, as formerly, that he now made his power felt in the settlement of the questions he was interested in. His literary work became almost wholly poetical, and his poems ceased to be poems of a " cause," but became concerned

with those domestic or legendary themes that his genius was so well fitted to utilise and adorn. But the great object of his earliest sympathies retained his interest to the last. The extension of liberty was the passion of his soul. The cause of the black man, all the world over, was especially dear to his heart. He had a warm, even an affectionate, regard for the Emperor Dom Pedro, because of his part in the emancipation of the slaves of Brazil. He had an outspoken admiration for that heroic soldier, General Gordon (who lost his life at Khartoum), because of his efforts to put down slavery in the Soudan. For the freedmen of the South he had, indeed, an interest almost paternal; and he devised and took part in many schemes for their education and social amelioration. Toward the end of his life, also, he began to take an active interest in the amelioration of the social condition of Indians.

Whittier was a member of the Society of Friends, or, as is most commonly said, a "Quaker." His Quakerism was a vital and controlling fact of his life. He spoke the plain language; he wore the plain clothes; he abode by the restraining rules of conduct which the custom of his sect prescribed. He never laid aside his Quaker habits, even for an instant. To outsiders his Quaker speech lent a piquancy to his conversation that was sometimes amusing. When Emerson once confessed to him with some feeling that "he, too," prayed, Whittier asked: "Does thee? Then what does thee pray for, Friend Emerson?" The plain directness of this question must have upset Emerson's gravity, for he laughingly replied: "Oh, when

I pray I thank God I live so near Boston." Once, when Mrs. Claflin (wife of General Claflin), at whose house Whittier often visited, was contriving a little gathering of friends to meet him, and doing so very secretly in the belief that if the shy poet became aware of her intention he would escape her, he, discovering that something out of the ordinary course was going on, surprised his hostess by suddenly asking: "What is thee going to do? I think thee is going to do something." And when questioned why he thought so, he answered, naïvely: "Oh, I know thee is going to have some kind of a fandango." The form of speech recorded in these illustrations was, however, the language used only in the company of familiar friends. In company less familiar a form a little nearer in its likeness to that of ordinary usage was assumed; as, for example, in a letter to Celia Thaxter, where he says: "I am glad thee are making thyself happy by making others so. Probably there is no other way." In still less familiar usage the "plain language" and the ordinary forms of speech were oddly combined; as, for example, in the following closing words of a letter to Bayard Taylor: "God bless thee and keep thee and thine during your European sojourn, and bring you safe back again." But, occasionally, in times of deep emotion, especially when addressing persons whose elevated and dignified character seemed to make it appropriate to do so, he assumed the true grammatical form of our language to denote the person spoken to, which is exceedingly rarely used, except by Quakers, and even by them rarely, also; as, for example, in his noble letter of con-

gratulation to Charles Sumner: "I rejoice that, unpledged, free, and without a single concession or compromise, thou art enabled to take thy place in the United States Senate." But the usual everyday language of Whittier, even when in the company of the learned, the refined, the elegant, the dignified, was the "plain" speech that had been used by his mother and father. "The speech," he used to say, "that has been used by my family for over two hundred years is good enough for me."

John Greenleaf Whittier was born in East Haverhill, Massachusetts, December 17, 1807. The house in which he was born, and to which he has given an undying interest, because of his description of it and its inmates in his poem, "Snow-Bound," had been built almost one hundred and twenty years before his birth by a paternal ancestor named Thomas Whittier, who had come from England and settled in Massachusetts in 1638. Between the poet and this Thomas Whittier there were only three generations, so that the Whittier stock enjoyed a well-founded reputation for longevity. The poet himself, despite his ill health, lived till he had nearly completed his eighty-fifth year. On his mother's side Whittier was descended from ancestry equally well planted on New England soil. She was a Hussey, and the earliest New England Husseys and the earliest New England Whittiers were contemporaries. One of her ancestors was a clergyman named Bachiler; and through him Whittier could claim kinship with Nathaniel Hawthorne and Daniel Webster. These three distinguished New Englanders were all remarkable for one physical character-

Whittier's Birthplace at East Haverhill

istic that had descended to them from their common ancestor—an eye dark, deep set, and lustrous, well known to all old New England families as the "Bachiler eye." The poet's family in his youth consisted of his father and his mother, his father's brother and his mother's sister, an elder sister, a younger brother, and a younger sister. These, with himself, comprised the household com-

WHITTIER'S MOTHER.

memorated in "Snow-Bound." They now all form one household again in the family grave plot at Amesbury.

Whittier's youth was characterised by the hardships and privations peculiar to New England farm life of about a century ago. The Whittier household was of the highest social distinction in the district they lived in; but their clothing was homespun and home-made; their fare was principally bread made from rye and corn; their few "store goods" were bought with their own butter and cheese; they had but one horse, and their fields were

ploughed by oxen; and they threshed their own grain with flails. But their home had the inestimable blessings of order and cleanliness; and the characters of the elders in it were even superior to the idealisation of them drawn in "Snow-Bound." Of educational or literary advantages there were few. There was a little district school near by; and fortunately, during one or two winters in Whittier's childhood, it was presided over by teachers somewhat superior to the ordinary sort. One of these lent Whittier a copy of Burns, and this proved to be the cardinal event in his life. He divined his own poetic gift, and began to write in rhyme himself. Not long afterward he obtained in some way a copy of one of the Waverley novels. Also, about the same time, he was able to buy a copy of Shakespeare. The reading of these books was for him the opening of a new heaven and a new earth. But his principal education in his earlier years was obtained from his study of the Bible. Not merely did its moral precepts and its religious doctrine sink into his heart, but he became thoroughly imbued with its beauty and its spirit as a work of literature. In after life many of his analogies, his illustrations, his metaphors, and his similes, owed their suggestion to his familiarity with biblical phraseology.

Three or four winters of attendance at a New England district school many years ago was but a poor scholastic outfitting for a career as a great national poet. And yet Whittier had little other. However, in his twentieth year he had one term of six months at the Haverhill Academy, situated in Haverhill, about three miles from

his home in East Haverhill. To defray the expenses of his attendance he had previously earned money sufficient by making a cheap kind of slippers, for which he received eight cents a pair. He subsequently attended a second term, and to meet expenses for this attendance he had previously taught a district school for a winter. These two terms constituted the whole of his academic education. Yet his attendance at the Haverhill Academy was valuable to him in respects other than educational. He was well received in the town and became acquainted with its best people. He was given full access to many good private libraries, and thus became introduced to the great world of literature. He formed friendships with both men and women that were destined to prove valuable to him during a great portion of his after life. He had begun to write poetry, and his poems not only were welcomely received in the columns of the local papers, but some of them had been honoured by being recited or read at public gatherings. Though it was but a short time since he had left his father's farm, an untutored and diffident boy, he was now, at the age of twenty-one, a young man of accepted popularity and recognised ability, and it was confidently predicted of him that his future would be eminent and prosperous.

Whittier soon found out that he had a fondness and a knack for journalism. He first obtained editorial employment on a protectionist paper called the *American Manufacturer*, published in Boston. This was in 1828. In 1829, owing to the failing health of his father, he had to return home again. In 1830, for a few months, until

his father's death, he edited the *Haverhill Gazette*. He then for some time edited the *New England Review*, published at Hartford, Connecticut, where he gained much political experience and made many friends, among them the poetess, Mrs. Sigourney. But that ill health which was to be the bane of his life was fast beginning to show itself, and he had (January, 1832) to return home again. For some years thereafter his journalistic work was wholly desultory, consisting for the most part of occasional contributions to papers with whose views he agreed. He was also, during this time, a very constant devotee of the muses. He is said during five years to have written and published at least one poem every week. Many of the poems thus written were subsequently suppressed, and but few of them were thought worthy by their author to be included in his collected works. Some of the best that he wrote appeared in the *New England Magazine*. But in 1833, as already stated, a decided change of feeling came to Whittier—a change that influenced not only his journalistic writings, his poems, his political and party sympathies and affiliations, but also all his prospects in life. He determined to devote himself, heart and soul, to the cause of abolition. He did so, knowing well that, for the future, political preferment, social distinction, literary success, would all be denied him. He counted the cost carefully and made his choice; but having done so, he left the consequences to his Maker.

The sign and seal of Whittier's consecration of himself to the cause of abolition was the publication (in the spring of 1833) of his pamphlet entitled "Justice and Expedi-

ency." But evidences of it that rose from deeper recesses in his heart were his spirit-stirring poems, afterward collected under the general name of "Voices of Freedom." These, as they rang through the liberty-loving North, were like the invocations of an inspired prophet. They summoned the people to the succour of the oppressed with a voice that seemed to come from the very throne of the Almighty. But, along with this poetical work, was other work, of a less pleasant but equally necessary kind. From a closet politician Whittier became an active, out-of-doors, working politician. Pushing forward the interest, now of this wing of his party, now of that, as one or the other seemed to favour even ever so slightly the cause he had most at heart, and making use not only of this but of every means he could to further the growth of the abolition idea, he soon became recognised as one with whose influence every political leader of the party he nominally belonged to had to reckon before any initial action of the party could be determined upon. In the meantime, too, he was pursuing his old course as pamphleteer and journalist. Partly because of ill health, partly that he might have more leisure for his chosen work as abolitionist, the farm at Haverhill was sold, and he, with his mother and sister, removed (1836) to the neighbouring village of Amesbury. In 1837 he was in New York as one of the secretaries of the American Anti-Slavery Society. In 1838, however, he went to Philadelphia to resume once more his old profession of editor. The paper he was in charge of was called *The Pennsylvania Freeman*, and he guided its course during two of the

most critical years of the anti-slavery movement. Not long after he became connected with the paper, the building in which his office was located, the beautiful Pennsylvania Hall, at that time the largest and finest building of its kind in Philadelphia—built by philanthropy and consecrated to the cause of liberty—was burned by an anti-abolition mob—none venturing to hinder them—on the evening of the fourth day after it was first opened. Editorial work, however, even without the interruption of burned offices, was not more suited to Whittier's health in Philadelphia than it had been in Hartford or Boston, and after two years of effort he was forced again (1840) to return home—this time to remain there (practically) till life was over.

In all the days of his anti-slavery labour Whittier's income was an exceedingly small one. His poems brought him nothing, or scarcely anything, and it was not till the *Atlantic Monthly* was established (that is, not till 1857) that he could get into any periodical not wholly managed in the interests of abolition. He therefore had to husband his money very carefully. When he returned from Philadelphia (1840) he found that he had to husband his strength as well as his money. He lived, however, as busy a life as his health would permit. He pursued the same course as before, only that now he wrote many poems other than those devoted to anti-slavery. His political activity in the interests of abolition increased rather than diminished, even though his physical strength grew weaker, and his physical ailments more pronounced and troublesome. At times he edited papers published

near at hand—in Haverhill, Lowell, and Amesbury. But his principal journalistic connection was with the *National Era*, a weekly paper established at Washington in 1847, and devoted to the support of abolition, but securing also a large constituency of general readers because of the ability of its management, and the literary excellence of many of its contributions. Among the poems sent to the *National Era* by Whittier were "Barclay of Ury," "Maud Muller," and "Burns." Two volumes of prose, "Old Portraits and Modern Faces" and "Literary Recreations," were also afterward made up out of his prose contributions to this journal. When the *Atlantic Monthly* was established Whittier was one of its first contributors, and he continued to write for it during all his life thereafter. He did not send to it many anti-slavery poems, but during the war some of his best pieces first saw the light in it, as, for example, "Barbara Frietchie."

When the issue of the war had brought the long struggle of the abolitionists to an end, and their glorious victory was won, Whittier gave himself up almost wholly to poetical composition. The principal of those works by which he will live in literature as a poet of the home affections and of New England life were all written after he had sung his noble hymn of thanks:

"Ring and swing,
Bells of joy! On morning's wing
Send the song of praise abroad!
With a sound of broken chains,
Tell the nation that He reigns,
Who alone is Lord and God!"

And with the publication of these later works Whittier found himself not only famous but financially prosperous. "Snow-Bound," written in the autumn of 1865, and published in 1866, brought him $10,000 for its first edition. "The Tent on the Beach," published in 1867, sold at the rate of 1,000 a day till an edition of 20,000 was exhausted. "Miriam," published in 1871, sold numerously. "Mabel Martin," published as an illustrated book in the holiday season of 1875-76, brought him $1,000 as a "Christmas present." With all his earnings, however, Whittier continued the same simple style of living he had always followed. But he increased decidedly the number and amount of his continuous benefactions. One great and irremediable regret, however, he felt during all his years of fame and prosperity—namely, that his mother and younger sister had not lived to share them. His mother, of whom Colonel Higginson says that "the whiteness of her bread and the purity of her linen were almost sacramental," died in 1857. His sister, whom Colonel Higginson describes as "the rarest of women," "a woman never to be forgotten"—who had devoted her life to forward her brother's work and promote his happiness—died September 3, 1864. The poet had often feared that he would be taken away before his sister, and that thus she would be left alone and helpless; but the event proved that he was to outlive her by over a quarter of a century, and do much of his best work after he was sixty years of age.

Whittier had many friends. Not only was every ardent abolitionist a devoted follower of his, but he numbered

OAK KNOLL, WHITTIER'S SUMMER RESIDENCE AT DANVERS.

among his familiar acquaintances, besides, many persons, men of the highest political rank, the principal literary men and women of his time. He was especially beloved of women. Almost every noted authoress of America might be numbered as having been among his most intimate friends. Mrs. Sigourney, Lucy Hooper, Gail Hamilton, Grace Greenwood, Celia Thaxter, Edith Thomas, Annie Fields, Sarah Orne Jewett, Lucy Larcom, Louise Chandler Moulton, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, were a few of the many who honoured him with their love and reverence. Oliver Wendell Holmes once wrote to him that there was no poet whose works came to his wife—"a very true-hearted woman"—with so much interest as his. His life was so largely domestic that it had been passed almost wholly in the company of women—first his mother and sister at Haverhill and Amesbury, then his niece at Amesbury, and finally his cousins at Oak Knoll. And it was in the house of the daughter of one of his oldest and dearest friends that he died—Hampton Falls, September 7, 1892.

TEN-MINUTE TALK.

By May Haggenbotham.

Bryant, Longfellow, Emerson, Hawthorne, Whittier! Such a literary galaxy is rare enough in any country, or at any period, and the heart of every American may justly swell with pride in contemplating it.

Each one of this bright company has had his meed of admiration and criticism. Each has been compared to some writer of old-world note whose characteristics he seemed to re-echo. Whittier has been called the American Cowper. But no such comparison can aid one in forming a just estimate of the Quaker poet. Whittier is distinctively—indeed, one might say, curiously—American. His first productions were racy of the soil; and to the very end we find his writings utterly free from any half-conscious imitation of foreign styles and methods.

You have doubtless read his household lyrics—those simple songs that gave him such a hold upon the popular heart as made him later, in the anti-slavery agitation, a veritable power in the land. About these early themes he has told us:

"I found that the things out of which poems come were not—as I had always imagined—somewhere away off in a world and

life lying outside the edge of our own New Hampshire sky; they were right here about my feet and among the people I knew. The common things of our common life, I found, were full of poetry."

And so Whittier has taken us into the sturdy atmosphere of New England life and shown us the romance and beauty that lie beneath its rugged surface.

One cannot help feeling the home influence of Whittier's views of life as compared with the spirit of "plaintive isolation and dainty estrangement from the active world" which imparts to Longfellow's verse its individual flavour.

If you want to test this turn from the "Voices of the Night" to the "Songs of Labour"—those

> . . . . . "Simple lays
> Of homely toil may serve to show
> The orchard bloom and tasseled maize
> That skirt and gladden duty's ways—
> The unsung beauty hid life's common things below."

And we believe truly that from these simple lays

> . . . . "The toiler bent
> Above his forge, or plow, may gain
> A manlier spirit of content,
> And feel that life is wisest spent
> Where the strong working hand makes strong the working brain."

Nor does Whittier, in choosing these humble themes, forfeit by one jot or tittle the right to be classed as a true poet—a real artist.

The ancient definition—from which all laws of intellectual criticism may be deduced—declares that a poet's single aim is to rouse the emotions; his instrument is the pictorial power of the quickened imagination, coupled with the musical power of song.

Surely the wells of profound feeling are to be sought at the very roots of humanity—in the fundamental relations of men to one another and to their environment.

When a writer can, by the power of his imagination and the magic effects of song, exalt the common relations of man to man, and thrill the soul with the sense of the dignity of labour, he has fulfilled one of the highest conditions of his art.

Have you ever thought how nearly akin are the offices of the poet and the artist? Their aim is a common one—to stir the wells of profound feeling in the human breast. In this connection one inevitably thinks of the French artist, Jean François Millet. What Whittier has done with his pen Millet has done, in a degree, with his brush. He has depicted for us the common occupations of sowing, reaping, gleaning, fetching water, etc., with the sympathetic power of his masterful art in a way that must forever make us feel the dignity of those homely toils and the beauty of soul that goes with their willing performance.

The story of Whittier's life and the many interesting notes of his character that have been made by loving friends bring us very near to him; but if we want to have real joy of our acquaintance with the poet we must read his poems and let their noble lessons sink into our souls.

We must try to realise the pricelessness of those qualities for which he is noted—his cheerfulness, his honour, his wit, his charity, and his calm, trustful piety—qualities that are essential to a well-rounded life but that are too rarely found in combination.

Of our poet, in closing, we can truly say he has fulfilled the law that the gentle, high-minded Sidney lays down for us in his "Defense of Poesy"—that the true poet "not only shows the way but giveth so fair a prospect into the way as will entice any man to enter it."

An appreciative writer says: "Whittier's reputation has grown like a forest tree and may reasonably expect the life of one." The far-reaching influence of the moral and spiritual uplift he has given humanity cannot be measured by the life of any material thing. He has passed to another life, but

> "Somewhere yet that atom's force
> Moves the light-poised universe."

REMINISCENCES AND CRITICAL STUDIES.

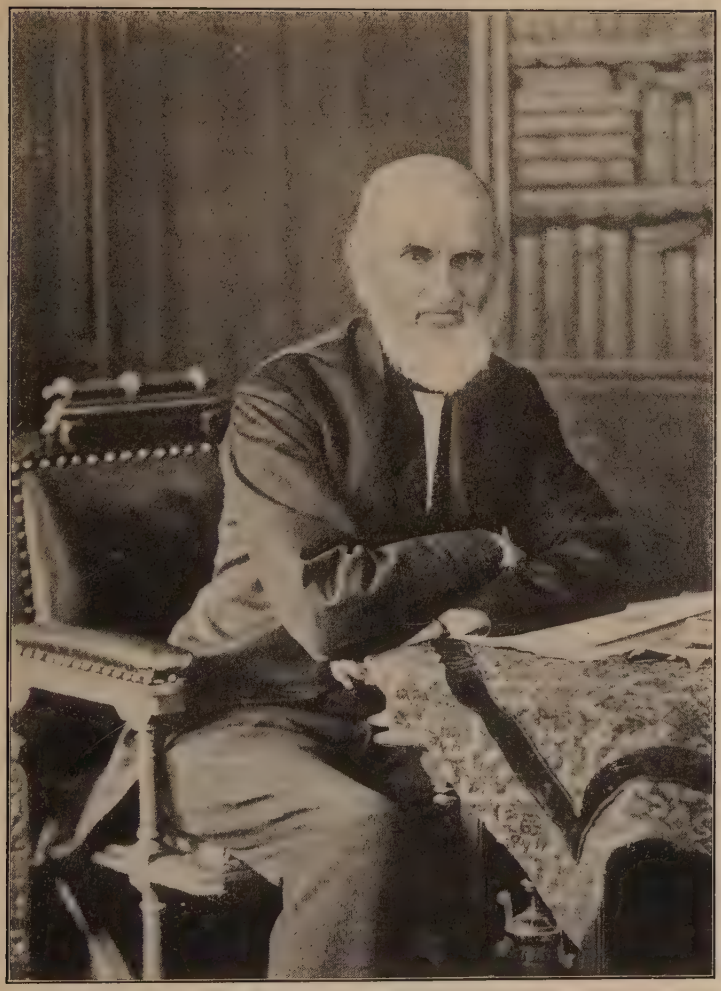
SELECTED.

WHITTIER'S MOTHER.

THE mother of the poet was a devoted disciple of the Society of Friends. That she was a person of deep and tender religious nature is evident to one looking at the excellent oil-portrait of her which hangs in the little parlour at Amesbury. The head is inclined graciously to one side, and the face wears that expression of ineffable tranquillity which is always a witness to generations of Quaker ancestry. In the picture, her garments are of smooth and immaculate drab. The poet once remarked to the writer that one of the reasons why his mother removed to Amesbury, in 1840, was that she might be near the little Friends' "Meeting" in that town.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY, *in "John Greenleaf Whittier: His Life, Genius, and Writings."*

WHITTIER S FATHER.

John Whittier, the father of the poet, is described by citizens of Haverhill as being a rough but good, kind-



WHITTIER IN HIS LIBRARY.

hearted man. He went by the sobriquet of "Quaker Whycher." In "Snow-Bound" we learn how he ate moose and samp in trapper's hut and Indian camp on Memphremagog's wooded side, and danced beneath St. François' hemlock-trees, and ate chowder and hake-broil at the Isle of Shoals. He was a sturdy, decisive man, and deeply religious. Although there was no Friends' Church in Haverhill, yet on "First-Days" Quaker Whycher's "one-hoss shay" could be seen wending toward the old brown meeting-house in Amesbury, six miles away.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY (Lo.).

THE OLD HOMESTEAD OF WHITTIER'S BOYHOOD AND "SNOW-BOUND."

The old homestead where Whittier was born, in 1807, is still left standing, and although built more than two hundred years ago, it is in good condition. It is on a high tableland, surrounded by what in the late fall and winter seems a dreary landscape. Carlyle's Craigenputtock, the Burns cottage, the Whittier homestead, all have a certain correlation, each of them the home of genius and of comparative poverty, and each so bleak and bare as to send the imagination of the dwellers out on strong wings to lovelier scenes. Little boxes and paperweights are made from the boards of the garret-floor of the Whittier homestead, as they are from the Burns belongings; and twigs of the overshadowing elm are varnished and sold for pen-holders. But the whole house would have to go to the lathe to meet the demand, if it

were answered generally, for it is the old farmhouse celebrated by "Snow-Bound," our one national idyll, the perfect poem of New England winter life.—HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD, *in "John Greenleaf Whittier at Amesbury," in "Authors at Home"* (Cas.).

HOW WHITTIER CAME TO ENTER THE WORLD OF LITERATURE AND WRITING.

One day, as our boy-poet was mending a stone fence along the highway, in company with Uncle Moses, along came the postman on horseback, with his leathern bag of mail, like a magician with a Fortunatus' purse; and, to save the trouble of calling at the house, he tossed a paper to young Whittier. He opened it with eager fingers, and behold! his poem in the place of honour. He says that he was so dumbfounded and dazed by the event that he could not read a word, but stood there staring at the paper until his uncle chided him for loitering, and so recalled him to his senses. Elated by his success, he of course sent other poems to the *Free Press*. They attracted the attention of Garrison[1] so strongly that he inquired of the postman who it was that was sending him contributions from East Haverhill. The postman said that it was a "farmer's son named Whittier." Garrison decided to ride over on horseback, a distance of

[1] William Lloyd Garrison—at that time the editor of the *Free Press*, a paper published at Newburyport, Massachusetts. Whittier and Garrison soon became intimate friends, and were for a quarter of a century associated in anti-slavery labours.

fifteen miles, and see his contributor. When he reached the farm, Whittier was at work in the field, and when told that there was a gentleman at the house who wanted to see him, he felt very much like "breaking for the brush," no one having ever called on him in that way before. However, he slipped in at the back door, made his toilet, and met his visitor, who told him that he had power as a writer, and urged him to improve his talents. The father came in during the conversation, and asked young Garrison not to put such ideas into the mind of his son, as they would only unfit him for his home duties. But, fortunately, it was too late; the spark of ambition had been fanned into a flame.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY. (*Cf.* above.)

HOW WHITTIER WON THE HEARTS OF "COMMON FOLKS."

The quaint grammatical solecisms of the Quaker and the New England farmer—the "thee's" and the omission of the g's from present participles and other words ending in "ing"—give to the poet's conversation a certain slight piquancy and picturesqueness. The writer remembers once speaking with a labourer whom Mr. Whittier had employed. The good fellow could not conceal his admiration for the poet. "Why," he said, "you wouldn't think it, would you, but he talks just like common folks. We was talkin' about the apples one day, and he said: 'Some years they ain't wuth pickin',—just like anybody, you know; ain't stuck up at all, and yet

he's a great man, you know. He likes to talk with farmers and common folks; he don't go much with the big bugs—one of the nicest men, and liberal with his money, too."—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

WHITTIER'S LOVE OF CHILDREN.

It is not so well known as it ought to be that the author of "Snow-Bound" has as deep a love of children as had Longfellow. Before the Bearcamp House [1] was burned to the ground in 1880, Mr. Whittier used sometimes to come up from Amesbury with a whole bevy of little misses about him, and at the hotel the wee folk hailed him as one of those dear old fellows whom they always love at sight. When sitting by the fireside, or stretched at ease on the fragrant hay in the barn or field, or walking among the hills, nothing pleased him better than to have an audience of young folks eagerly listening to one of his stories.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

WHITTIER A THOROUGHLY PATRIOTIC AMERICAN.

Whittier is as remarkable for his faith in man as for his faith in God. He is in the highest degree patriotic, American. He loves America because it is the land of

[1] "Bearcamp River House," a hotel in West Ossipee, New Hampshire, thirty miles north of Lake Winnipiseogee, where Whittier frequently spent his summers. It was situated in a region just within the outskirts of the White Mountains. Near by was "Mount Whittier," named after the poet. "Among the Hills," "Sunset on the Bearcamp," and "The Seeking of the Waterfall" are among the poems inspired by his life there.

freedom. It has been charged against him that he is no true American poet, but a Quaker poet. The American, it is said, is eager, aggressive, high-spirited, combative; the Quaker, subdued and phlegmatic. The American is loud and boastful and daring and reckless; the Quaker, cautious, timid, secretive, and frugal. This is undoubtedly true of the classes as types, but it is far from being true of Whittier personally. He has blood militant in him. He comes of puritan as well as Quaker stock. The Greenleafs and the Batchelders [1] were not Quakers. His writings alone furnish ample proof of his martial spirit. The man and the Quaker struggle within him for the mastery; and the man is, on the whole, triumphant. Whenever his Quakerism permits, he stands out a normal man and a genuine American.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER A MORAL HERO.

The central trait of Whittier's mind is love of freedom. Even his religion, which is so profound an element in his nature, and so all-pervasive in his writings, will be found, on a deep analysis, to be a yearning for freedom from the trappings of sense and time, in order to attain to a spiritual union with the Infinite. This love of freedom, this hatred of oppression, intensified by persecution, both ancestral and personal, stimulated by contact with puritan democracy, as well as by the New England Tran-

[1] Through the "Batchelders" Whittier was related distantly to Webster and Hawthorne.

scendental movement, and flowering out luxuriantly in the long struggle against slavery—this noble sentiment, and that long self-sacrificing personal warfare in behalf of the oppressed, form the true glory of Whittier's character, Shy, timid, almost an invalid, having a nervous horror of mobs and personal indignities, he yet forgot himself in his love of Man, overcame and underwent—suffered social martyrdom for a quarter of a century, never flinching, never holding his peace for bread's sake or fame's sake, not stopping to count the cost, taking his life in his hand, and never ceasing to express his high-born soul in burning invective and scathing satire against the oppressor, or in words of lofty hope and cheer for the suffering idealist and lover of humanity, whoever and wherever he was. Whittier is a hero as well as a poet. He will be known to posterity by a few exquisite poems, but chiefly by his moral heroism and patriotism.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

WHITTIER'S SISTER, ELIZABETH WHITTIER.

Elizabeth Hussey Whittier—the younger sister and intimate literary companion of her brother, the poet—was a person of rare and saintly nature. In the little parlour of the Amesbury home there hangs a crayon sketch of her. The face wears a smile of unfailing sweetness and patience. That her literary and poetical accomplishments were of an unusually high order is shown by the poems of hers appended to Mr. Whittier's "Hazel Blossoms," published after her death. Her poem, "Dr. Kane

in Cuba," would do honour to any poet. In the piece entitled "The Wedding Veil" we have a hint of an early love transformed by the death of its object into a spiritual worship and hope, nourished in the still fane of the heart. —WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

THE LIFE TOGETHER OF WHITTIER AND HIS SISTER.

Mr. Whittier has never married, and with the single exception of the exquisite lines entitled "Benedicite," he has given the public no clew to the romance of his youth. His sister Elizabeth, sympathising with him completely, of a rare poetic nature and fastidious taste, and of delicate dark-eyed beauty, was long a companion that must have made the want of any other less keenly felt than by lonely men in general. The bond between the sister and brother was more perfect than any of which we have known, except that between Charles and Mary Lamb, and in this instance the conditions were of perfect moral and mental health. To the preciousness of the relationship the pages of the poet bear constant witness, and Amesbury village is full of traditions of their affection, and of the gentle loveliness and brilliant wit of Elizabeth, whom the people admired and reverenced almost as much as they do the poet himself.—HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD, *in "The Quaker Poet," in Harper's Magazine, January,* 1884.

THE MUTUAL LOVE OF WHITTIER AND HIS SISTER.

Whittier's sister Elizabeth was a sensitive woman, whose delicate health was a constant source of anxiety

to her brother, especially after the death of their mother, when they were left alone together in the home at Amesbury. As one of their intimate friends said, no one could tell which would die first, but they were each so anxious about the other's health that it was a question which would wear away into the grave first, for the other's sake. —Mrs. James T. Fields, *in "Whittier: Notes of his Life and Friendships," in Harper's "Black and White" series.*

WHITTIER AT HIS "VILLAGE CLUB."

Whittier wished to hear and know what interested others. He liked nothing better, he once said, than going into the "store" in the old days at Amesbury, when it was a common centre, almost serving the purpose of what a club may be in these later days, and sitting upon a barrel to hear "folks talk." The men there did not know much about his poetry, but they understood his politics, and he was able to put in many a word to turn the vote of the town.—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S PERSON AND APPEARANCE.

Whittier was a tall and rather slender man, measuring almost exactly six feet, with sloping shoulders, and he stood so straight as almost to be the personification of uprightness. No soldier was ever more erect, and this without the least stiffness or conventionality. His head was not large at the base, but high-crowned and finely arched. His eyes were magnificent, and can only be

compared to Hawthorne's eyes, though not so clear. Marshal von Moltke had eyes like two brilliant lights; even the Emperor dared not look into them. Whittier's were not like this, but seemed to be lighted by hidden fires; very large, dark, and powerful. He had a sensitive and refined mouth, which was closed, as if by an effort of the will. In general appearance he resembled men of the Revolutionary period, as if a contemporary of Washington had luckily been dropped out of the eighteenth century.—FRANK PRESTON STEARNS, *in "Whittier," in "Sketches from Concord and Appledore"* (Put.).

THE "BACHILER" EYES.

Old New England people were quick to recognise "the Bachiler[1] eyes," not only in the Whittiers, but in Daniel Webster, Caleb Cushing, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and William Bachiler Greene. These men of the grand eyes were all descended from a gifted old preacher of great fame in early colonial days, a man of true distinction and devoted service, in spite of the dishonour with which he let his name be shadowed in his latest years. It would be most interesting to trace the line still further back into the past; but when the Bachiler eyes were by any chance referred to in Whittier's presence, he would look shyly askance, and sometimes speak, half with pride, half with a sort of humorous comparison, of his Hampton ancestor.—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS. (*Cf.* above.)

[1] Variously spelled. Sometimes "Batchelder."

WHITTIER'S UNLIKENESS TO THE MEN OF HIS TIME.

The figure of the Quaker poet as he stood before the world was unlike that of any other prominent figure which has walked across the stage of life. . . . His lithe, upright form, full of quick movement, his burning eye, his keen wit, bore witness to a contrast in himself with the staid, controlled manner and the habit of the sect into which he was born. The love and devotion with which he adhered to the Quaker Church and doctrines, served to accentuate his unlikeness to the men of his time, because he early became also one of the most determined contestants in one of the sternest combats which the world has witnessed.—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS.

WHITTIER'S IDEALS.

Whittier believed in the ideals of his time; the simple ways of living; the eager nourishing of all good things by the sacrifice of many private wishes; in short, he made one cause with Garrison and Phillips, Emerson and Lowell, Longfellow and Holmes. His standards were often different from those of his friends, but their ideals were on the whole made in common.—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS.

WHITTIER'S FRIENDS.

His friends were to Whittier, more than to most men, an unfailing source of daily happiness and gratitude. With the advance of years, and the death of his unmar-

ried sister, his friends became all in all to him. They were his mother, his sister, and his brother; but in a certain sense they were always friends of the imagination. He saw some of them only at rare intervals, and sustained his relations with them chiefly in his hurried correspondence. He never suffered himself to complain of what they were not; but what they were, in loyalty to chosen aims, and in their affection for him, was an unending source of pleasure. With the shortcomings of others he dealt gently, having too many shortcomings of his own, as he was accustomed to say, with true humility. —Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S LIFE OF INVALIDISM.

A life of invalidism made consecutive labour of any kind an impossibility to Whittier. For years he was only able to write for half an hour or less, without stopping to rest, and these precious moments were devoted to some poem or other work for the press, which was almost his only source of income. His correspondence suffered, from a literary point of view; but his letters were none the less delightful to his friends.—Mrs. James T. Fields.

WHITTIER'S HOMELY FRIENDLINESS.

In the spring of 1865 Whittier came to Campton, on the Pemigewasset River, in New Hampshire, a delightful place for those who love green hills and the mystery of rivers.

We were passing a few weeks there by ourselves, and

it was a great surprise and pleasure to see our friend. He drove up to the door one afternoon just as the sun was slanting to the west, too late to drive away again that day. In our desire to show him all the glories of the spot, we carried him out at once, up the hillside, leaping across the brook, gathering pennyroyal and Indian posy as we went, past the sheep and on and up, until he, laughing, said: "Look here, I can't follow thee; besides, I think I've seen more of this life than thee have, and it isn't all so new to me! Come and sit down here, I'm tired."—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS.

WHITTIER'S ASSURANCE TOUCHING THE UNSEEN.

We sat awhile overlooking the wonderful panorama,[1] the winding river, the hills and fields all green and radiant, listening at times to a mountain stream which came with wild and solitary roar from its solemn home among the farther heights. Presently we returned to supper; and afterwards, sitting in the little parlour which looked towards the sunset on the high hills far away, his mind seemed to rise into a higher atmosphere. He began by quoting the last verse of Emerson's "Sphinx"—

"Uprose the merry Sphinx,
And couched no more in stone;
She melted into purple cloud,
She silvered in the moon;
She spired into a yellow flame;
She flowered in blossoms red;
She flowed into a foaming wave;
She stood Monadnock's head."

[1] Referred to in the previous extract.

He talked long and earnestly upon the subject of our spiritual existence independent of the body. I have often heard him dwell upon this subject since; but the awful glory of the hills, the dark and silence of our little parlour, the assured speech touching the unseen, of one who had thought much and suffered much, and found a refuge in the tabernacle not made with hands, were very impressive. We felt that "it was good for us to be there."—Mrs. James T. Fields.

WHITTIER'S SYMPATHY FOR AND WITH WOMEN.

Whittier's sympathy with the difficulties of a literary life, particularly for women, was very keen. There seem to be few women-writers of his time who have failed to receive from his pen some token of recognition. Of Edith Thomas he once said in one of his notelets: "She has a divine gift, and her first book is more than a promise —an assurance." Of Sarah Orne Jewett he was as fond as of a daughter, and from their earliest acquaintance his letters are filled with appreciation of her stories. This predisposition to think well of the work of others gave him the happy opportunity in more than one instance of bringing authors of real talent before the public who might otherwise have waited long for general recognition. This was especially the case with one of our best beloved New England writers, Lucy Larcom. Indeed he early became the foster-father of Lucy Larcom's children of the brain, and what was far more to her, a lifelong friend, adviser, and supporter.

One of Whittier's most intimate personal friends for

many years was Lydia Maria Child. Beginning in the earliest days of the anti-slavery struggle, their friendship lasted into the late and peaceful sunset of their days. . . . Shortly after Mrs. Child's death he wrote from Amesbury: "My heart has been heavy ever since I heard of dear Maria Child's death. The true, noble, loving soul! *Where* is she? *What* is she? *How* is she? The moral and spiritual economy of God will not suffer such light and love to be lost in blank annihilation. She was herself an evidence of immortality. In a letter written to me at seventy years of age she said: 'The older I grow the more I am awe-struck (not frightened, but awed) by the great mystery of an existence here and hereafter. No thinking can solve the problem. Infinite wisdom has purposely sealed it from our eyes.'"—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S WANT OF INTEREST IN MUSIC.

Whittier possessed a deep nature and true breadth of character in spite of the limitations of his environment; yet there were certain prejudices and antipathies that adhered to him still. His unwillingness to listen to music is rather to be attributed to the old Quaker, puritanical notion that all sensuous enjoyment is sinful, than to the well-known indifference of poets for that sister art to which they owe so much. He once went so far as to take an interest in some musical glasses, and seemed to be pleased with the simple tunes that were played on them; but pianos and violins he had no liking for.—Frank Preston Stearns. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S WANT OF INTEREST IN WORKS OF ART.

Whittier enjoyed looking at portraits of distinguished men, but did not approve of religious pictures. When some one asked him why he did not make a trip to Europe he said: "Travelling does not seem to agree with me; but, besides that, I do not think I should find pleasure in it. Their great cathedrals which people go to see would not be of any account to me; and I am afraid I should not enjoy the works of art. I should like to see Switzerland; but there are also fine mountains over there"—pointing to New Hampshire.—FRANK PRESTON STEARNS.

WHITTIER'S INTEREST IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

There was never a moment of Whittier's life when, prostrated by illness, or overwhelmed by private sorrows, or removed from the haunts of men, he forgot to take a living interest in public affairs, and to study closely the characteristics and works of the men who were our governors. He understood the characters of our public officers as if he had lived with them continually, and his quick apprehension with regard to their movements was something most unusual. De Quincey, we remember, surprised his American friends by taking their hands, as it were, and showing them about Boston, so familiar was he with our localities. Whittier could sit down with politicians and easily prove himself the better man on contested questions.—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER AS A LETTER-WRITER.

Some one has said that Whittier's epistolary style was perfect. Doubtless he could write as good a letter on occasion as any man who ever lived, but he sustained no such correspondence. His notes and letters were homely and affectionate, with the delightful carelessness possible in the talk of intimate friends. They present no ordinary picture of human tenderness, devotion, and charity, and these qualities gain a wonderful beauty when we remember that they came from the same spirit which cried out with Ezekiel:

"The burden of a prophet's power
Fell on me in that fearful hour;
From off unutterable woes
The curtain of the future rose;
I saw far down the coming time
The fiery chastisement of crime;
With noise of mingling hosts, and jar
Of falling towers and shouts of war,
I saw the nations rise and fall
Like fire-gleams on my tent's white wall."

—Mrs. James T. Fields.

THE LONELINESS OF WHITTIER'S LIFE.

It was Whittier's sad experience to be deprived of the companionship of all those most dear to him, and for over twenty years to live without that intimate household communion for the loss of which the world holds no recom-

pense. For several years, before and after his sister Elizabeth's death, Whittier wore the look of one who was very ill. His large, dark eyes burned with peculiar fire, and contrasted with his pale brow and attenuated figure. He had a sorrowful, stricken look, and found it hard enough to reconstruct his life, missing the companionship and care of his sister, and her great sympathy with his own literary work. There was a likeness between the two; the same speaking eyes marked the line from which they sprang, and their kinship and inheritance.—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S FINAL PECUNIARY SUCCESS.

Whittier is the only American poet who may be fairly said to have earned his living by his poems, though Longfellow might have done so, if it had been his fortune to reside in a country town. His exchequer suffered, however, in the earlier part of his career on account of his principles. All the anti-slavery people suffered for their convictions in one way or another—just as the slaveholders suffered for theirs, in the end. But Whittier represented the heart of the American people, and after the publication of "Barbara Frietchie" the tide turned in his favour. "Snow-Bound" had an extensive sale, and brought him in nearly ten thousand dollars. "The Tent on the Beach" paid almost as well; and his collection of English and American poetry was a fortunate hit, on the part of his publishers, which Whittier's modest nature would not otherwise have thought of; so that he was well

provided for in old age, and could even have made a journey around the world like General Grant, if he had been so disposed.—FRANK PRESTON STEARNS. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S INTIMATE PERSONAL RELATION WITH HIS PUBLISHER.

Whittier accustomed himself to more frequent visits to Boston after his sister's death, but he was seldom, if ever, persuaded to go to the Saturday Club, to which so many of his friends belonged. Sometimes he would bring a new poem for a private first reading, and for that purpose would stay to breakfast or luncheon [at Mr. Fields' house]; but late dinners were contrary to the habit of his life, and he seldom sat down to one.

"I take the liberty," he wrote one day, "of inclosing a little poem of mine which has beguiled some weary hours. I hope thee will like it. How strange it seems not to read it to my sister! If thee have read Schoolcraft, thee will remember what he says of the 'Little Vanishers.' The legend is very beautiful, and I hope I have done it justice in some sort."—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS.

HOW WHITTIER'S PUBLISHERS TREATED HIM WITH RESPECT TO "SNOW-BOUND."

Whittier is not an inspirational writer; he reaches his best only when application and effort have fired his brain;

he subjects his verses to minute and severe revision, and he believes thoroughly in hard work. The sums that he has received for his work of late years have been more like compensation than formerly; and although he is by no means rich, yet his circumstances are quite comfortable. He is one of the few authors to whom a publisher has been better than his word, as happened when, after the success of the illustrated issue of "Snow-Bound," he received a second check for the same amount as that paid on the original contract.—HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD (*written in* 1883). (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S REGARD FOR THE DOCTRINE AND WORSHIP OF FRIENDS.

We strolled forth into the village street as far as the Friends' meeting-house, and sat down upon the steps while he told us something of his neighbours. He himself, he said, had planted the trees about the church; they were then good-sized trees. He spoke very earnestly about the worship of the Friends. All the associations of his youth and all the canons of his education and development were grounded on the Friends' faith and doctrine, and he was anxious that they should show a growth commensurate with the age. He disliked many of the innovations, but his affectionate spirit clung to his people, and he longed to see them drawing to themselves a larger measure of spiritual life, day by day. He loved the old custom of sitting in silence, and hoped they would not stray away into habits of much speaking. The old hab-

its of the meeting-house were very dear to him.—Mrs. James T. Fields.[1] (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S REGARD FOR THE REGARD OF OTHERS.

Whittier's ever-growing fame was not taken by him as a matter of course. "I cannot think very well of my own things," he used to say; "and what is mere fame worth when thee is at home, alone, and sick with headaches, unable either to read or to write?" Nevertheless, he derived very great pleasure and consolation from the letters and tributes which poured in upon him from hearts he had touched or lives he had quickened. "That I like," he would say sometimes; "that is worth having." But he must often have known the deeps of sadness in winter evenings when he was too ill to touch book or pen, and when he could do nothing during the long hours but sit and think over the fire.—Mrs. James T. Fields.

WHITTIER'S KINDNESS AND INDULGENCE TO YOUNG WRITERS.

Of course Whittier has had a great deal of that sort of thing to endure [attentions from bores and flatterers], and perhaps in no more vexatious form than in the submission of reams of manuscript for his consideration by young writers who have no consideration. He reads and criticises and returns these manuscripts, often, too, at his own expense, to the fledgelings; he answers as much as

[1] The selection is a reminiscence of a visit made to Whittier at his home in Amesbury in the autumn of 1866.

a couple of thousand requests for autographs yearly; his kindness and his generosity to young writers are so proverbial that even long novels are sent him with the request that he will secure a publisher for them. That all this is an impertinence past expression he never allows the guilty party to feel, although it costs him hours of invaluable time—time the more invaluable that his headaches seldom let him work continuously more than a quarter of an hour.—HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD (*written in* 1883). (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S ESTIMATE OF BURNS.

Our first knowledge of his arrival in town was usually that early and punctual ring at the door to which I have referred. He would come in looking pale and thin, but full of fire, and, as we would soon find, of a certain vigour. He became interested one morning in a plan proposed to him for making a collection of poems for young people, one which he finally completed with the aid of Miss Lucy Larcom. We got down from the shelf Longfellow's "Poets and Poetry of Europe," and looked it over together. Whittier easily fell into talk of Burns, who was his master and ideal. "He lives, next to Shakespeare," he said, "in the heart of humanity."—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER AND CHARLES DICKENS.

In the year 1867 Charles Dickens came to America to give his famous Readings. Whittier, as we have seen,

was seldom tempted out of his country home and habitual ways, but Dickens was for one moment too much for him. To our surprise he wrote to ask if he could possibly get a seat to hear him. "I see there is a crazy rush for tickets." A favourable answer was despatched to him as soon as practicable, but he had already repented of the indiscretion. "My dear Fields," he wrote, "up to the last moment I have hoped to occupy the seat so kindly promised me for this evening. But I find I must give it up. I must read my 'Pickwick' alone as the Marchioness played cribbage. I should like, nevertheless, to see Dickens and to shake that creative hand of his! It is as well, doubtless, so far as he is concerned, that I cannot do it; he will have enough and too much of that, I fear. I dreamed last night I saw him surrounded by a mob of ladies, each with her scissors snipping at his hair."—Mrs. James T. Fields.

WHITTIER AND MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Matthew Arnold went to see Whittier upon his arrival in this country, and it is needless to say that Whittier derived sincere pleasure from the visit; but Arnold's delightful recognition of Whittier's "In School Days," as one of the perfect poems which must live, gave him fresh assurance of fulfilled purpose in existence. He had followed Arnold with appreciation from his earliest appearance in the world of letters, and knew him, as it were, "by heart" long before a personal interview was possible. In a letter written after Arnold's return to England, he

says: "I share thy indignation at the way our people have spoken of him—one of the foremost men of our time, a true poet, a wise critic, and a brave, upright man, to whom all the English-speaking people owe a debt of gratitude. I am sorry I could not see him again." And when the end came a few years later, he was among the first to say: "What a loss English literature has sustained in the death of Matthew Arnold!"—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S SLEEPLESSNESS AND HIS EARLY RISING.

The choice of the early breakfast hour for his visits was his own idea. He was glad to hit upon a moment which was not subject to interruptions, one when he could talk at his ease of books and men. These visits were always a surprise. He liked to be abroad in good season, and had rarely missed seeing the sun rise in forty years. He knew, too, that we were not late people, and that his visits could never be untimely. Occasionally, with the various evening engagements of a city, we were not altogether fit to receive him, but it was a pleasure to hear his footstep in the morning, and to know that we should find him in the library by the fire. He was himself a bad sleeper, seldom, as he said, putting a solid bar of sleep between day and day, and therefore often early abroad to question the secrets of the dawn. We owe much of the intimate friendship of our life to these morning hours spent in private uninterrupted talk.

"I have lately felt great sympathy with ——," he said

one morning, "for I have been kept awake one hundred and twenty hours—an experience I should not care to try again."—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS.

WHITTIER'S ENJOYMENTS IN HIS LATER YEARS.

At Danvers, Whittier was able to enjoy the free open air. He loved to sit under the fine trees which distinguished the lawn, to play with the dogs, and wander about unmolested until he was tired. The ladies of the house exerted themselves to give him perfect freedom and the tenderest care. The daughter became his playmate, and she never quite grew up, in his estimation. She was his lively and loving companion. Writing from Danvers, one December, he says: "What with the child, and the dogs, and Rip Van Winkle, the cat, and a tame gray squirrel who hunts our pockets for nuts, we contrive to get through the short, dark days."—MRS. JAMES T. FIELDS. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER ON THE ISLES OF SHOALS.

The climate of the Isles of Shoals exactly suited Whittier's dreamy nature. He would wander from the piazza into the billiard-room, and back again to the piazza, and then look at the sea for an hour or more without speaking a word to any one. Indeed he talked very little even with those who knew him best, and strangers had no chance at all with him. There was something respectful in the hush of conversation whenever he approached a group of

people who were talking loudly or laughing. I never met him walking over the rocks, or knew of his going out on the water either for sailing or fishing.—Frank Preston Stearns. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S INTEREST IN TREE-PLANTING.

The long years and the long days passed on with scarcely perceptible diminution of interest in the affairs of this world. "I am sorry to find that the hard winter has destroyed some handsome spruces I planted eight years ago," he wrote one May day; "they had grown to be fine trees. Though rather late for me, I shall plant others in their places; for I remember the advice of the old Laird of Dumbiedikes to his son Jock: 'When ye hae naething better to do, ye can be aye sticking in a tree; it'll aye be growin' when ye are sleeping.' There is an ash-tree growing here that my mother planted with her own hands at threescore and ten. What agnostic folly to think that tree has outlived her who planted it!"—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S INTEREST IN THE SIGHTS OF CITY STREETS.

Whittier was full of excellent resolutions about going often to Boston, but he never could make a home there. "I see a great many more things in the city than thee does," he would say, "because I go to town so seldom. The shop windows are a delight to me, and everything

and everybody is novel and interesting. I don't need to go to the theatre. I have more theatre than I can take in every time I walk out."—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

WHAT WHITTIER THOUGHT WAS OF REAL CONSEQUENCE IN THE FUTURE.

"How good Longfellow's poem [1] is! A little sad, but full of 'sweetness and light.' Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, and myself are all getting to be old fellows, and that swan-song might serve for us all. 'We who are about to die.' God help us all! I don't care for fame, and have no solicitude about the verdicts of posterity.

"'When the grass is green above us
And they who know us and who love us
Are sleeping by our side,
Will it avail us aught that men
Tell the world with lip and pen
That we have lived and died?'

"What we *are* will then be more important than what we have done or said in prose or rhyme, or what folks that we never saw or heard of think of us."—*Quoted by Mrs. James T. Fields.*

WHITTIER'S IMPROMPTU VERSES OF GRATEFULNESS.

One of the last, perhaps the very last visit Whittier made to his friends in Boston was in the beautiful autumn

[1] Referring to Longfellow's "Morituri Salutamus," written in 1875. Longfellow was then sixty-eight years old; Whittier was the same age; Emerson was four years older, and Holmes two years younger.

weather. The familiar faces he hoped to find were absent. He arrived without warning, and the very loveliness of the atmosphere which made it possible for him to travel had tempted younger people out among the falling leaves. He was disappointed, and soon after sent these verses to rehearse his experience—

"I stood within the vestibule
Whose granite steps I knew so well,
While through the empty rooms the bell
Responded to my eager pull.

"I listened while the bell once more
Rang through the void, deserted hall;
I heard no voice, nor light foot-fall,
And turned me sadly from the door.

"Though fair was Autumn's dreamy day,
And fair the wood-paths carpeted
With fallen leaves of gold and red,
I missed a dearer sight than they.

"I missed the love-transfigured face,
The glad, sweet smile so dear to me,
The clasp of greeting warm and free:
What had the round world in their place?

"O friend, whose generous love has made
My last days best, my good intent
Accept, and let the call I meant
Be with your coming doubly paid."

But even this journey was beyond his strength. He wrote: "Coming back from Boston in a crowded car, a window was opened just behind me, and another directly

opposite, and in consequence I took a bad cold, and am losing much of this goodly autumnal spectacle. But Oak Knoll woods were never, I think, so beautiful before."—Mrs. James T. Fields. (*Cf.* above.)

LONGFELLOW, TENNYSON, AND WHITTIER.

Longfellow, Tennyson, and Whittier were the three most popular poets of the latter part of the present century, and it is difficult to determine which of them may be considered the best. While neither of them rises to the very highest rank, each has excellences peculiarly his own. Whittier does not equal the others in their graceful diction and rare metrical skill, but he surpasses them in earnestness and intensity. He paints in deeper colours and with a firmer touch. The larger and more ambitious poems of Tennyson and Longfellow are interesting, but they lack the strength, vigour, and greatness of design which are inseparable from all the noblest works of art.—Frank Preston Stearns. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S LIKENESS TO FRANKLIN.

Unlike as Whittier and Franklin were in many respects, they were alike in others. Both of them had the sympathy with the lowly which comes of early experience. Both learned a handicraft, for as a boy Franklin set type and worked a printing press and Whittier had learned the trade of slipper-making. To both of them literature was a means rather than an end in itself. Verse to Whittier

and prose to Franklin was a weapon to be used in the good fight. In Whittier's verse, as in Franklin's prose, there was the same pithy directness which made their words go home to the hearts of the plain people, whom they both understood and represented. In the fortunate absence of any class distinctions in this country both Franklin and Whittier were able to develop at will, expanding freely as occasion served, and educating themselves into harmony with broader opportunities. To Franklin was given the larger life and the greater range of usefulness; but Whittier always did with all his might the duty that lay before him.—PROF. BRANDER MATTHEWS, *in "An Introduction to American Literature"* (Am.).

WHITTIER'S SPONTANEOUS SONG-POWER.

Said Whittier once: "I never had any methods. When I felt like it, I wrote, and I had neither the health nor patience to work over it afterward. It usually went as it was originally completed." But this spontaneous song-power is able at times to produce such a symmetrical and beautiful result as "The Pipes at Lucknow," which seems to me the lyrical masterpiece of Whittier, and the best of the poems called forth by the events described. It is all lovely.—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON, *in "American Literature*, 1607-1885" (Put.).

WHITTIER THE LAUREATE OF OUT-DOOR LIFE.

Whittier's genius is wholly instinctive and national. When peace followed the storms of political struggle and of civil war, he returned naturally to the themes and methods of nature and the soul. Unvexed by literary envy, and oblivious to mere fame, he became the laureate of the ocean beach, the inland lake, the little wood-flower, and the divine sky. The strength and the songs of youth and middle-age were freely given to humanity, often at the expense of art; but his life has been so spared that he has produced distinctly literary work enough for a more than transient fame. The gold in his verse is plentifully mixed with dross, but it may readily be found. It is the gold of the man's heart, quickly wrought by the facile artist's hand.—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON.

WHITTIER'S CHARACTERISTIC POEM, "SNOW-BOUND."

Whittier's merits are best summarised in his New England winter idyl "Snow-Bound," from which his customary defects are creditably absent. Upon this poem, as the years go by, will chiefly rest its maker's fame. It combines his descriptive and lyrical powers with his accustomed expression of the thoughts and hopes of the human heart. . . . "Snow-Bound" was an inspiration of his own heart and life. Home is as narrow as the ancestral walls, but as broad as humanity; and here is a work both local and general—of the kind which tends to make the whole world kin. It is a little sphere seen through

the transparent soul and style of the simple poet. Notwithstanding the freshness of spring, the luxuriance of June, and the sober wealth of autumn, winter is the most characteristic season of that land to which the pilgrims came in December; and therefore "Snow-Bound" is a fitly chosen title for Whittier's characteristic scenes and portraits.—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON.

"SNOW-BOUND," "THE DESERTED VILLAGE," AND "THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT."

Little by little during the decades since the publication of "Snow-Bound" it has become almost axiomatic in America to say that the poem deserves mention with "The Deserted Village" and "The Cotter's Saturday Night." Perhaps this verdict, though common, is too hurriedly confident; but it is certain that the qualities of the poem are the same as those which have given lasting renown to its famous forerunners; and that it shows "no sign of age, no fear to die."—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON.

WHITTIER THE POET OF THE HOMELY HEART AND LIFE OF HIS COUNTRYMEN.

Whittier, on the whole, has lived nearer the homely heart and life of his northern countrymen than any other American poet, save Longfellow. His reformatory lyrics have been saved from a shrill, strident tone by his refreshing habit of turning aside to the simplest and most peace-

ful country scenes and characters; and the chief idyl of New England, "Snow-Bound," resembles "The Cotter's Saturday Night" in its presentation of the soul as well as the body of the people's life.—Prof. Charles F. Richardson. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER PECULIARLY THE POET OF HIS OWN SOIL.

Although not claiming it as a superior distinction, yet, to our own mind, Mr. Whittier is perhaps the most peculiarly American poet of any that our country has produced. The woods and waterfowl of Bryant belong as much to one land as to another; and all the rest of our singers—Emerson, Longfellow, Lowell, and their brethren—with the single exception of Joaquin Miller, might as well have been born in the land of Shakespeare and Milton and Byron as in their own. But Whittier is entirely the poet of his own soil.—Harriet Prescott Spofford. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER THE POET OF THE NEW ENGLAND PEOPLE.

From his earliest song to his latest, Whittier has been the poet of the people, and particularly of the New England people, or those of the Massachusetts Bay settlement. Seldom has his muse sought the glamour of remote regions—

> "The heavens are glassed in Merrimack:
> What more could Jordan render back?"

he asks. The orange groves of Sorrento are no sweeter to his fancy than the balsam of the pines on Ramoth Hill, and the vale of Cashmere is not so rich and curious as the marvellous valley of the Gloucester woods where some freak of frolic nature has set the tropical magnolia-trees. To him tiller and mechanic, drover and fisherman, humble homes and huts of forest boughs, have more interest than belted knight and noble lady, palaces and historic fanes. Nothing in the daily life of the first immigrants has been too sordid or trivial to be distilled in his alembic. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that if every other record of the early history and life of New England were lost, the story could be constructed again from the pages of Whittier.—HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD (*written in* 1883). (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER THE BURNS OF NEW ENGLAND.

What Scott and Burns were to Scotland, Whittier was to New England. He touched her life at every point. For the cold facts concerning her history and people one may go to Palfrey, but for her heart and soul one must read the poems of Whittier. In them one sees not only a perfect picture of stream and mountain, of wild-flower and forest bird, but loving studies of that sturdy people who have been the bone and sinew of American grandeur. —PROF. FRED. LEWIS PATTEE, *in "A History of American Literature"* (Sil.).

WHITTIER THE LAUREATE OF THE WHITE HILLS.

By a comparatively few exquisite lyrics Whittier made himself the acknowledged laureate of the White Hills of New England, as Hawthorne is their romancer and Starr King their historian. Whittier has also, like Longfellow,

WHITTIER'S RESIDENCE, AMESBURY, MASS.

sung surpassingly well of the Northern Atlantic coast, as was befitting a poet who in childhood, during nights of storm,

> "heard the roar
> Of ocean on his wintry shore."

and, like Bryant, he could paint with true tints the Northern Indian summer. There are few autumn pictures in our literature more perfect than the prelude to "Among the Hills," "The Lumbermen," "The Huskers," "The Corn Song," and "The Pumpkin."—PROF. FRED. LEWIS PATTEE. (*Cf.* above.)

THE INDIGENOUS QUALITY OF WHITTIER'S POEMS—THEIR NATIONAL SPIRIT.

If anybody will take the trouble to glance over the complete works of Whittier, he will find that one of the predominant characteristics of his writings is their indigenous quality, their national spirit. Indeed, this is almost too notorious to need mention. He, if any one, merits the proud title of "A Representative American Poet." His whole soul is on fire with love of country. His country is his bride, and upon it he has showered all the affectionate wealth of his nature.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S LYRICS ALL RAPID OUTPOURINGS.

Almost all of Whittier's lyrics have evidently been rapidly written, poured forth in the first glow of feeling, and not carefully amended and polished as were Longfellow's works. And herein he is at fault, as was Byron. But the delicate health of Whittier, and his toilsome early days, form an excuse for his deficiency in this respect. His later creations, the product of his leisure years, are

full of pure and flawless music. They have no harmony or rhythmic volume of sound, as in Tennyson, Swinburne, Milton, and Shakespeare; but they set themselves to simple melodious airs spontaneously. As you read them your feet begin to tap time.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

WHITTIER'S NATURAL ART IN POETRY-MAKING.

The art of poetry came so naturally to Whittier, that he said he could not understand why every one did not write it as well as or better than he could.—FRANK PRESTON STEARNS. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S PERSONALITY IN HIS POETRY.

The leaders of our recent poetic movement, with the exception of Longfellow, who, like Tennyson and Browning, devoted himself wholly to ideal work, seem to have figured more distinctively as personages, in both their lives and writings, than their English contemporaries. This remark certainly applies to Poe, Emerson, Whitman, Holmes, and Lowell, and to none more clearly than to Whittier. His traits, moreover, have begotten a sentiment of public affection which, from its constant manifestation, is not to be overlooked in any judgment of his career. In recognition of a beautiful character critics have not found it needful to measure this native bard with tape and calipers. His service and the spirit of it offset the blemishes which it is their wont to condemn in poets whose exploits are merely technical.—EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN, *in "Poets of America"* (Hou.).

"NOTHING FINER IN THE HEBREW PROPHETS."

To the list of Whittier's virtues as an artist, it remains to add his frequent surprising strength. This is naturally most marked in the anti-slavery poems. When he wrote these, he was in the flush of manhood, his soul at a white heat of moral indignation. He is occasionally nerved to almost superhuman effort: it is the battle-axe of Richard thundering at the gates of Front de Bœuf. For nervous energy there is nothing in the Hebrew prophets finer than such passages as these:

"Strike home, strong-hearted man!
Down to the root
Of old oppression sink the Saxon steel."
—"*To Ronge.*"

"Maddened by Earth's wrong and evil,
'Lord!' I cried in sudden ire,
'From thy right hand, clothed with thunder,
Shake the bolted fire!'"
—"*What the Voice Said.*"

"And Lord, an unloosed maniac, strong,
Blood-drunken, through the blackness trod,
Hoarse-shouting in the ear of God
The blasphemy of wrong."
—"*The Rendition.*"

—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

WHITTIER'S RELIGIOUS POEMS.

Many of Whittier's purely religious poems are the most exquisite and beautiful ever written. The tender feeling,

the warm-hearted trustfulness, and the reverent touch of his hymns speak directly to our hearts. The prayer-hymn at the close of "The Brewing of Soma" ("Dear Lord and Father of mankind," etc.), and such poems as "At Last" and "The Wish of To-day," are unsurpassed in sacred song. Their stanzas haunt the mind with their beauty, and you are obliged to learn them by heart before you can have peace.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY. (*Cf.* above.)

THE POET THAT THOUSANDS LOVE ABOVE ALL OTHERS.

One regrets using a critical pen at all in discussing such a writer. It would be ungracious to call to a severe account one who places the most modest estimate upon his own work, and who has distinctly stated that, up to "about the year 1865, his writings were simply episodical, something apart from the real object and aim of [his] life." It is hard to criticise severely one who is unjust to himself through excess of diffident humility. In the exquisite Proem to his complete poems he would fain persuade us that he cannot breathe such notes as those of—

> "The old melodious lays
> Which softly melt the ages through,
> The songs of Spenser's golden days,
> Arcadian Sidney's silvery phrase,
> Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest morning dew."

But not so, O gentle minstrel of Essex! There are poems of thine which thousands prefer to the best of

Spenser's or Sidney's, and which will continue to exist as long as beauty is its own excuse for being. Thou too hast been in Paradise, to fetch thence armfuls of dewy roses for our delight; not mounting thither by the "stairway of surprise," but along the common highway of daily duty and noble endeavour, unmindful of the dust and heat and chafing burdens, but singing aloud thy songs of lofty cheer, all magically intertwined with pictures of wayside flowers, and the homely beauty of lowliest things.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

THE STRONG, DEEP FAITH OF WHITTIER'S RELIGIOUS POEMS.

Whittier's poems come to the lips upon all occasions of deep feeling almost as naturally as the Scriptures do. They are current coin with reformers the world over. They are the alpha and omega of deep, strong religious faith. Whoever would best express his entire confidence in the triumph of the right and his reliance upon God's power against the devices of men finds the words of Whittier upon his lips; and to those who mourn and seek for consolation how naturally and involuntarily come back lines from his poems they long have treasured, but which perhaps never had a personal application until now! To the wronged, the downtrodden, and the suffering they appeal as strongly as the psalms of David.—HATTIE TYNG GRISWOLD, *in "Home Life of Great Authors"* (Mg.).

WHITTIER ONE OF THE CREATORS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE.

Whittier's poetical development was a steady growth. His genius matured late, and in his early poems there was little promise of the exquisite work of his riper years, unless it was a distinct indication of his rare power of telling a story in verse. It must be remembered that when Whittier began to write, American literature had yet to be created. There was not a single great American poem, with the exception of Bryant's "Thanatopsis."—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY. (*Cf.* above.)

THE "SONGS OF LABOUR."

When the reader, who has worked gloomily along through Whittier's anti-slavery and miscellaneous poems, reaches the "Songs of Labour," he feels at once the breath of a fresher spirit—as a traveller who has been toiling for weary leagues through sandy deserts bares his brow with delight to the coolness and shade of a green forest through whose thick roof of leaves the garish sunlight scarcely sifts. We feel that in these poems a new departure has been made. The wrath of the reformer has expended itself, and the poet now returns, with mind elevated and more tensely keyed by his moral warfare, to the study of the beautiful in native themes and in homely life. "The Shipbuilders," "The Shoemakers," "The Fishermen," and "The Huskers" are genuine songs; and more shame to the craftsmen celebrated if

they do not get them set to music, and sing them while at their work.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

WHITTIER AS A BALLAD WRITER.

The period in Whittier's life from about 1858 to 1868 we may call the Ballad Decade, for within this time were produced most of his immortal ballads. We say immortal, believing that if all else that he has written shall perish, his finest ballads will carry his name down to a remote posterity. "The Tent on the Beach" is mainly a series of ballads; and "Snow-Bound," although not a ballad, is still a narrative poem closely allied to that species of poetry, the difference between a ballad and an idyl being that one is made to be sung and the other to be read; both narrate events as they occur, and leave to the reader all sentiment and reflection.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

WHITTIER'S FINEST BALLADS.

The finest ballads of Whittier have the power of keeping us in breathless suspense of interest until the *dénouement* or the catastrophe, as the case may be. The popularity of "Maud Muller" is well deserved. What a rich and mellow translucence it has! How it appeals to the universal heart! And yet "The Witch's Daughter" and "Telling the Bees" are more exquisite creations than "Maud Muller"; they have a spontaneity, a subtle pathos, a sublimated sweetness of despair that take hold

of the very heart-strings, and thus deal with deeper emotions than such light, objective ballads as "Maud Muller" and "Skipper Ireson's Ride." But the surface grace of the two latter have of course made them the more popular, just as the "Scarlet Letter" finds greater favour with most people than does "The House of the Seven Gables," although Hawthorne rightly thought the "Seven Gables" to be his finest and subtlest work.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

WHITTIER AND WORDSWORTH.

A companion ballad to "The Witch's Daughter" is "The Witch of Wenham," a poem almost equal to it in merit, and, like it, ending happily. These ballads do not quite attain the almost supernatural simplicity of Wordsworth's "Lucy Gray" and "We are Seven"; but they possess an equal interest, excited by the same poetical qualities. "Telling the Bees," however, seems to the writer as purely Wordsworthian as anything Wordsworth ever wrote—

> "Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
> Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

WHITTIER, EMERSON, AND "SNOW-BOUND."

The most delicate bit of realistic winter poetry in literature is Emerson's "Snow-Storm." Mr. Whittier is an

ardent admirer of that writer—as what poet is not?—and his own productions show frequent traces of Emersonianisms. He has prefixed to "Snow-Bound" a quotation from the "Snow-Storm," and there can scarcely be a doubt that to the countless obligations we all owe Emerson must be added this: that he inspired the writing of Whittier's finest poem, and the best idyl of American rural life. It is too complex and diffusive fully to equal in artistic purity and plastic proportion "The Cotter's Saturday Night" of Burns; but it is much richer than that poem in felicitous single epithets, which, like little wicket doors, open up to the eye of memory many a long-forgotten picture of early life.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY. (*Cf.* above.)

"AMONG THE HILLS."

"Among the Hills" is a little farm-idyl, or love-idyl, of the New Hampshire mountain land, and bearing some resemblance to Tennyson's "Gardener's Daughter." It is an excellent specimen of the poems of Whittier that reach the popular heart and engage its sympathies. In the remotest farmhouses of the land you are almost sure to find among their few books a copy of Whittier's Poems, well-thumbed and soiled with use. The opening description of the prelude to "Among the Hills" could not be surpassed by "Bion" or "Theocritus."—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

THE POEMS ON DANIEL WEBSTER.

In "The King's Missive, and Other Poems," published in 1881, the most notable piece is "The Lost Occasion," a poem on Daniel Webster, finer even than the much-admired "Ichabod" [also on Daniel Webster], published many years previously. "The Lost Occasion" is pitched in a high, solemn, and majestic strain. It is a superb eulogy, full of magnanimity and generous forgiveness.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY.

THE ANTI-SLAVERY POEMS.

There is nothing in American literature, unless it be the anti-slavery papers of Thoreau, which equals the sevenfold heated moral indignation of Whittier's poems on slavery—a wild melody in them like that of Highland pibrochs; now plaintively and piteously pleasing, and now burning with passion, irony, satire, scorn; here glowing with tropical imagery, as in "Toussaint L'Ouverture" and "The Slaves of Martinique," and there rising into lofty moral atmospheres of faith when all seemed dark and hopeless. There can be no doubt that Whittier's poems did as much as Garrison's editorials to key up the minds of people to the point required for action against slavery. Some of these anti-slavery pieces still possess great intrinsic beauty and excellence, as, for example, "Toussaint L'Ouverture," "The Farewell," "The Slave Ships," and "The Slaves of Martinique." In these four productions there is little or none of the dreary

didacticism of most of the anti-slavery poems, but a simple statement of pathetic, beautiful fact, which is left to make its own impression. Another powerful group of these slavery poems is constituted by the scornful, mock-congratulatory productions, such as "The Hunters of Men," "Clerical Oppressors," "The Yankee Girl," "A Sabbath Scene," "Lines Suggested by Reading a State Paper wherein the Higher Law is Invoked to Sustain the Lower One," and "The Pastoral Letter." The sentences in these stanzas cut like knives and sting like shot.—WILLIAM SLOANE KENNEDY. (*Cf.* above.)

"THE BURDEN AND THE VISION OF THE PROPHET WERE HIS."

Difficult as it is to recall the pangs of pain once past, to have the blood boil again over old wrongs when once righted, yet when those now unborn shall read Whittier's poems of that period [1] they will feel that there was something glorious in having lived in a time when such voices rang every day about one, dark and dreadful though the time may have been, and one where men felt that in pursuing their ends they carried their lives in their hands. Nothing can exceed, nothing can equal, the wild power of some of these songs, now soaring in scorn, now writhing in angry shame, rising with indignant outcry, burning in fiery eloquence, and all moving to the magic of music and the pathos of their undercurrent of sorrow. The

[1] The anti-slavery agitation period.

singer would seem to have felt himself set apart for God's great purposes. He knew the burden of the prophet and the vision of Ezekiel had been his.—HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER THE GREAT HIGH-PRIEST OF LITERATURE.

Whittier is the great high-priest of literature. But few priests at any time have had such an audience and such influence as he. The moral and religious value of his work can scarcely be overstated. Who can estimate the power which his strong words had in the days that are now but a fading memory—in the great conflict which freed the bodies of so many million slaves? And who can ever estimate the power his strong words have had throughout his whole career in freeing the minds of other millions from the shackles of old beliefs? His blows have been strong, steady, persistent. He has never had the fear of man before his eyes. No man has done more for freedom, fellowship, and character in religion, than he. Hypocrisy and falsehood and cant have been his dearest foes, and he has ridden at them early and late with his lance poised and steed at full tilt.—HATTIE TYNG GRISWOLD. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER'S IDYLS AND SONGS SECURE IN THEIR IMMORTALITY.

Whittier's rank as a poet must depend more and more upon his lyrical studies of his native New England. His

songs of freedom, notwithstanding their vigour, are constantly losing their interest as the great events, of which they are a part, fade into the past; but his idyls and songs of humble life are as secure in their immortality as are those of Burns. Whittier won his place among American poets not in spite of his want of early culture, but rather on account of it. A broad education would have smoothed and refined his verses, but it would also have taken away much of the simple idyllic beauty which is now their chief charm. His were "native wood-notes wild," often crude in form, awkward in rhyme, and homely in thought, but nevertheless intensely original and sincere. He was near the soil, he knew by heart the "simple annals" of humble life, and he poured out, without a thought of books, the songs that came to his lips. Thus, though he covered minutely only one section, he is recognised both at home and abroad as the most national of our poets, a singer distinctively a product of American soil.—Prof. Fred. Lewis Pattee. (*Cf.* above.)

WHITTIER THE SIR GALAHAD OF AMERICAN SONG.

Taken for all in all, Whittier, "our bard and prophet best-beloved," that purely American minstrel, so virginal and so impassioned, at once the man of peace and the poet militant, is the Sir Galahad of American song. He has read the hearts of his own people, and chanted their emotions, and powerfully affected their convictions. His lyrics of freedom and reform, in his own justified lan-

guage, were "words wrung from the Nation's heart, forged at white heat." Longfellow's national poems, with all their finish, cannot rival the natural art of Whittier's. They lack the glow, the earnestness, the intense characterisation of such pieces as "Randolph of Roanoke," "Ichabod," and "The Lost Occasion."—EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN, *in* "*Poets of America.*" (*Cf.* above.)

SOME LITERARY QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

By Harriet L. Mason, A.M.,

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QUERIES.

1. How was Whittier enabled to defray his expenses at the academy where he finished his education?

2. Under what circumstances did Whittier say: "I understand how St. Paul felt when he was three times stoned"?

3. Of what fact was Whittier prouder than of all his verse?

4. In what respect was Whittier's life like that of Charles Lamb?

5. What promise made to his mother in early boyhood did Whittier always keep?

6. What reasons did Whittier once give as to why he never married?

7. A poem written to beguile the weariness of a sick-chamber is considered Whittier's masterpiece; name it.

8. What poem begun when Whittier was at Haverhill Academy remained unfinished for thirty years?

9. What poem of Whittier's did Dr. Holmes say was the most beautiful schoolboy poem in the language?

10. What poem is a study of a poor Acadian girl exiled as was Evangeline?

11. A book of poems given him by his schoolmaster marked a red-letter day in Whittier's life and kindled in his own heart the spirit of poetry. Whose poems were they?

12. What were Whittier's last words?

ANSWERS.

1. By making ladies' slippers at twenty-five cents a pair.

2. When in company with an English abolitionist he was mobbed at Concord, New Hampshire, in 1835.

3. That he was a signer of the anti-slavery declaration of 1833, as the youngest delegate from Massachusetts to the convention.

4. Like Charles Lamb and his sister Mary, Whittier and his sister Elizabeth were devoted companions. She was his complement in temperament and intellect.

5. That he would never enter a "playhouse."

6. "Circumstances—the care of an aged mother and the duty owed to a sister in delicate health for many years—must be the excuse for living the lonely life which has called out thy sympathy. I have learned to look into happiness through the eyes of others."

7. "Snow-Bound"; a reminiscence of his own youthful home and dear ones—a picture of a New England winter.

8. "Skipper Ireson's Ride."

> "Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
> Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
> By the women of Marblehead."

9. "In School Days."

> "I'm sorry that I spelt the word.
> I hate to go above you."

10. "Marguerite."

> "The robins sang in the orchard,
> Where buds to blossoms grew;
> Little of human sorrow,
> The buds and the robins knew."

11. Burns' poems—given him by his schoolmaster, Joshua Coffin.

12. "Love to all the world."

READERS' AND STUDENTS' NOTES.

1. Whittier, like Wordsworth, with whom, not altogether inaptly, Whittier has sometimes been compared, is to be read most profitably in selections. Not a little of what he has written, though it may be said to be poetry, is not of the standard of poetic merit we generally have in mind when we think of Whittier as a poet. For Wordsworth, a great critic, himself a poet, made a selection of poems very much more truly representative of their author's genius than the complete poems are. No Matthew Arnold, so far as we are aware, has arisen to do this service for Whittier. Nevertheless, it is only in selections that Whittier can be profitably read.

2. Wordsworth used to say: "Although I am known to the world only as a poet, I have given twelve hours' thought to the condition and prospects of society for one to poetry." Whittier used to say: "I am not insensible to literary reputation; I love, perhaps too well, the praise and good-will of my fellowmen; but I set a higher value on my name as appended to the Anti-Slavery Declaration of 1833 than on the title-page of any book." We must not forget this primary fact in Whittier's life and work in forming any estimate of him as a poet, or in framing for ourselves any plan for the study of his poetry. It was not until the slavery question was settled, and the great war which helped to settle it gone so far on with that its end could be plainly seen, that Whittier gave himself up to the making of poetry with a free heart. It, no doubt, can be asserted with truth that Whittier

never could have written "Snow-Bound," unless he had first been permitted to sing his "Laus Deo."

3. Though they are not, perhaps, the efforts by which Whittier will live longest in literature, nevertheless Whittier's poems on freedom and slavery, his "anti-slavery poems," as he called them, are the poems that are most characteristic of the man and of his life and his life's great work, and these, we think, should have a first place in all study of Whittier. As William Cullen Bryant said: "They were war cries that stirred the blood like a trumpet calling to battle." The more famous, and most likely to be enduring, of these poems are the following: (1) *"Toussaint L'Ouverture," (2) "The Slave Ships," (3) "The Yankee Girl," (4) "The Hunters of Men," (5) "The Pastoral Letter," (6) *"The Farewell of the Virginia Slave Mother to her Daughters Sold into Southern Bondage," (7) *"Massachusetts to Virginia," (8) *"To Faneuil Hall," (9) *"The Pine Tree," (10) *"Randolph of Roanoke," (11) "The Slaves of Martinique," (12) "A Sabbath Scene," (13) "The Rendition," (14) "The Pass of the Sierra," (15) "Thy Will be Done," (16) **"Ein Feste Burg ist Unser Gott"—known also by its first line: "We wait beneath the furnace blast"; (17) *"The Watchers," (18) *"At Port Royal"—including "The Song of the Negro Boatmen"; (19) *"The Battle Autumn of 1862," (20) "The Proclamation," (21) **"Barbara Frietchie," (22) **"Laus Deo." To this class of poems may also be added (23) *"Ichabod," (24) "The Lost Occasion," (25) *"Brown of Ossawatomie," (26) "The Reformer," (27) *"Our State," (28) *"The Eve of Election," (29) *"After the Election." [NOTE.—In the above list poems of more than ordinary merit are marked with a star (*), and masterpieces with two stars (**).]

4. The poems (with the possible exception of "Barbara Frietchie") by which to-day Whittier is known to the largest number of readers, and the poems by which he is likely to be longest remembered, are two: (1) "Snow-Bound," and (2) "Maud Muller." "Snow-Bound," of course, is the poet's chief

work. It will live as long as any poetry of its age will live. Other favourites of almost equal popularity, if not of as great intrinsic worth, are (1) "Telling the Bees," (2) "My Playmate," (3) "The Barefoot Boy," (4) "In School Days." These four poems are idyls dear to the hearts of all New England people, and, for that matter, of people everywhere. Almost equally popular are those other idyls: (1) "Among the Hills," and (2) the almost faultless "Mabel Martin." These eight poems, together with "Barbara Frietchie," mentioned before, and "Skipper Ireson's Ride," "King Volmer and Elsie," and the "Tent on the Beach," to be mentioned later, constitute the choicest anthology of Whittier's genius.

5. Whittier was the poet of working people. His sympathy went out into every sort of honest industry, no matter how humble. And with his sympathy of course went also the warmth and colour of his poetic imagination and fancy. Herein lay one of the secrets of his popularity. His "Songs of Labour"—including (1) "The Shoemakers," (2) "The Fishermen," (3) "The Lumbermen," (4) "The Shipbuilders," (5) "The Drovers," (6) "The Huskers," with its pendant, "The Corn Song"—brought poetry to regions rarely graced with its refinement. "The Huskers" deserves to rank with the poet's best work.

6. "As a ballad-writer," says Professor Pattee, "Whittier has had no equal among American poets—not even Longfellow. His ballads, which make up a surprisingly large part of his work, possess every requisite, being 'narrative in substance, lyrical in form, traditional in origin,' and withal vivid and rapid in execution. Their subjects are nearly all from early New England history and tradition." We will complete our note by continuing Professor Pattee's paragraph: "Some of them, like 'Pentucket,' 'The Norsemen,' and 'The Funeral Tree of the Sohokis,'* deal with the very earliest times of New England; others, like 'The Garrison of Cape Ann,' 'Cobbler Keezar's Vision'* and 'The Double-Headed Snake of Newbury,'* touch upon the popular superstitions of early days. In 'Cassandra Southwick,'* 'The

Exiles,' 'The King's Missive,' * 'How the Women Went from Dover,' and many others, the poet chose a subject very near his heart—the early persecutions of the Quakers—while in many more, like 'Mary Garvin,' 'John Underhill,' * 'The Witch's Daughter' * [previously noticed under the name given to it by Mr. Whittier in 1875, "Mabel Martin"], 'The Prophecy of Samuel Sewell,' 'The Swan Song of Parson Avery,' * 'The Palatine,' 'Abraham Davenport,' * and 'Amy Wentworth,' * he dealt with the varied scenes and incidents of early puritan life. So thoroughly did Whittier weave into these ballads the life and episodes of colonial days, that from them might be constructed almost a complete outline of early New England history." [NOTE.—To the more notable of the poems enumerated above we have affixed an asterisk (*).]

7. The poems named in the foregoing paragraph do not by any means comprise all of Whittier's ballads that are well worth studying and remembering. Among the more meritorious of those that are omitted are the following: (1) "The Vaudois Teacher," (2) "Kathleen," (3) "The Countess," * (4) "Norembega," (5) "King Volmer and Elsie," * (6) "The Dole of Jarl Thorkell," (7) "The Witch of Wenham," * and (8) "Saint Gregory's Guest." * More famous than almost any that have been mentioned is the schoolboy's favourite, "Skipper Ireson's Ride." In the volume entitled "The Tent on the Beach," too, the volume of poems published in the poet's sixtieth year, are several ballads, as yet not mentioned, that are among the poet's best efforts. Among these are (1) "The Wreck of the Rivermouth," (2) "The Changeling," and (3) "Kallundborg Church."

8. Whittier's first insight into poetry was gained from reading the poems of Robert Burns when still but a boy, and his ambition to be a poet was first inspired by what he then read. Ever afterwards he had an admiration for Burns, for the Scottish people, and for Scottish scenes and character. Several of Whittier's best poems are founded upon Scottish themes. Among these are the following: (1) "Barclay of Ury," (2) "Burns—on

Receiving a Sprig of Heather in Blossom," and (3) "The Pipes at Lucknow." *

9. Whittier's poetic work is so abundant that a mere enumeration of those poems that are of the greatest merit takes up considerable space. Although we have already mentioned many, there still remain a number that must not be overlooked. These we will simply arrange in groups:

I. PERSONAL POEMS.—(1) "To my Old Schoolmaster"; (2) "Bryant on his Birthday" (for the poet Bryant's seventieth birthday); (3) "Our Autocrat" (read at the "Breakfast" given in honour of Dr. Holmes by the publishers of the *Atlantic Monthly*, December 3, 1879); (4) "Within the Gate" (in memory of the poet's friend and fellow-worker, Lydia Maria Child); (5) "In Memory" (of James T. Fields).

II. POEMS, SUBJECTIVE AND REMINISCENT.—(1) "The Pumpkin," * (2) "Forgiveness," (3) "My Namesake" (an autobiographical poem), (4) "My Psalm," (5) "The Waiting," (6) "My Triumph," (7) "My Birthday."

III. POEMS OF NATURE.—(1) "A Dream of Summer," (2) "April," (3) "Summer by the Lakeside," (4) "Flowers in Winter," (5) "The River Path," (6) "The Vanishers," * (7) "Sunset on the Bearcamp," (8) "The Seeking of the Waterfall," (9) "The Trailing Arbutus," (10) "St. Martin's Summer," (11) "Sweet Fern," (12) "The Tent on the Beach." *

IV. RELIGIOUS POEMS AND POEMS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE.—(1) "The Crucifixion," * (2) "Palestine," (3) "Ezekiel," (4) "What the Voice Said," (5) "The Wife of Manoa to her Husband," (6) "My Soul and I," (7) "The Reward," (8) "The Wish of To-day," (9) "Questions of Life," (10) "Trust," (11) "Trinitas," (12) "The Shadow and the Light," (13) "The Cry of a Lost Soul," (14) "Andrew Rykman's Prayer," (15) "The Answer," (16) "The Eternal Goodness," ** (17) "The Common Question," (18) "Our Master," (19) "The Meeting" (in which the poet defends his religious opinions); (20) "The Brewing of Soma," (21) "The Friends' Burial," (22) "The Minister's

Daughter" * (a notable poem); (23) "At Last," (24) "The Cities of the Plain," (25) "Revelation," (26) "The Grave by the Lake," (27) "The Cable Hymn," (28) "The Worship of Nature."

[NOTE.—Wherever in the above paragraphs an asterisk (*) occurs it is to indicate that the poem named is of more than ordinary importance. As said before, a double asterisk (**) indicates a masterpiece.]

10. Whittier's poetry was such a natural outpouring of his heart, it was so exactly expressive of his real emotions and opinions, that it becomes infinitely dearer to the reader when it is read with a full knowledge of his life, character, and personality. The standard life of Whittier is that by his relative by marriage, Samuel T. Pickard. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 2 vols., $4.00.) Mr. Pickard's work is thoroughly careful and painstaking. It contains a sufficient number of the poet's letters and other autobiographical writings to give a personal charm to the whole.

11. Another life of Whittier that is not without considerable merit is W. Sloane Kennedy's. (Boston: D. Lothrop Company.) Mr. Kennedy's best work is seen in his analyses of Whittier's genius and writings. These, in the main, are excellent.

12. Whittier also forms the subject of one of Dr. Francis H. Underwood's excellent series of biographies, Longfellow and Lowell being subjects of other two. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.50 each biography.)

13. Whittier's was a character that appealed specially to the interest and sympathy of women. Of all portraitures of Whittier, we know of none more revealing and sympathetic than that by his friend of many years, Mrs. James T. Fields, entitled "Whittier: Notes of his Life and Friendships." (New York: Harper & Brothers: "Black and White" series. 50 cents.) The little volume is illustrated with numerous portraits and views of the poet's homes. This sketch by Mrs. Fields also forms a chapter of her charming book, "Authors and Friends," a work which, besides, contains chapters on Longfellow, Emerson, and Holmes.

(Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.50.) A companion book to Mrs. Fields' book on Whittier is that by his old friend, Mrs. Mary B. Claflin, entitled "Personal Recollections of Whittier." (New York: T. Y. Crowell & Co. 50 cents.)

14. A reminiscent account of Whittier of exceeding interest will also be found in Frank Preston Stearns' "Sketches from Concord and Appledore." (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.00.) As already mentioned, Mr. Stearns' book contains, besides much other matter, reminiscent accounts of Hawthorne and Emerson. No more interesting book of reminiscences, so far as we know, is printed.

15. Critical estimates of Whittier are numerous enough, but as a rule critics scarcely do justice to Whittier's genius. They are thrown off the scent, as it were, by the fact that a good deal of his writing is not even workmanship of a high order. They are thus apt to misestimate or underestimate the quality of the writing that *is* of high order, not alone of workmanship, but of genius. The student-reader, however, is referred as follows:

(1) To E. C. Stedman's "Poets of America," in which will be found an appreciative account of "the Sir Galahad of American Song," as the critic fondly calls him. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $2.25.)

(2) To Prof. C. F. Richardson's great work (so frequently mentioned in our notes), entitled "American Literature, 1607-1885." (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 2 vols. in one, $3.50.)

16. Other reminiscent and critical accounts of Whittier will be found as follows:

(1) In E. P. Whipple's "American Literature and Other Papers." (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.50.)

(2) In Hattie Tyng Griswold's "Home Life of Great Authors." (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. $1.50.)

(3) In J. L. and J. B. Gilder's "Authors at Home." (New York: Cassell Publishing Co.) The article we are now concerned with is by Harriet Prescott Spofford, and is entitled "John Greenleaf Whittier at Amesbury."

(4) In David A. Wasson's "Whittier," in the *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1864.

(5) In Richard Henry Stoddard's "John Greenleaf Whittier," in *Scribner's Monthly*, August, 1879.

(6) In George M. White's "The Local Associations of Whittier's Poems," in *Harper's Magazine*, February, 1883.

(7) In Harriet Prescott Spofford's "The Quaker Poet," in *Harper's Magazine*, January, 1884.

17. Of Whittier's earlier poems, of which the copyright privileges have expired, there are numerous editions, many of them very neat and pretty. Of the "Complete Poems" the only publishers are Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, the owners of the copyrights and Mr. Whittier's authorised publishers. Their editions are numerous and, of course, excellent. The "Cabinet" edition at $1.00, the "Household" edition at $1.50, the "Cambridge" edition at $2.00, the "Library" edition at $2.50, are specially to be commended, because of their low price. The same publishers also publish Whittier's "Prose Works," and numerous editions of favourite individual poems, as, for example, "Snow-Bound," "Mabel Martin," "St. Gregory's Guest," and "The Tent on the Beach."

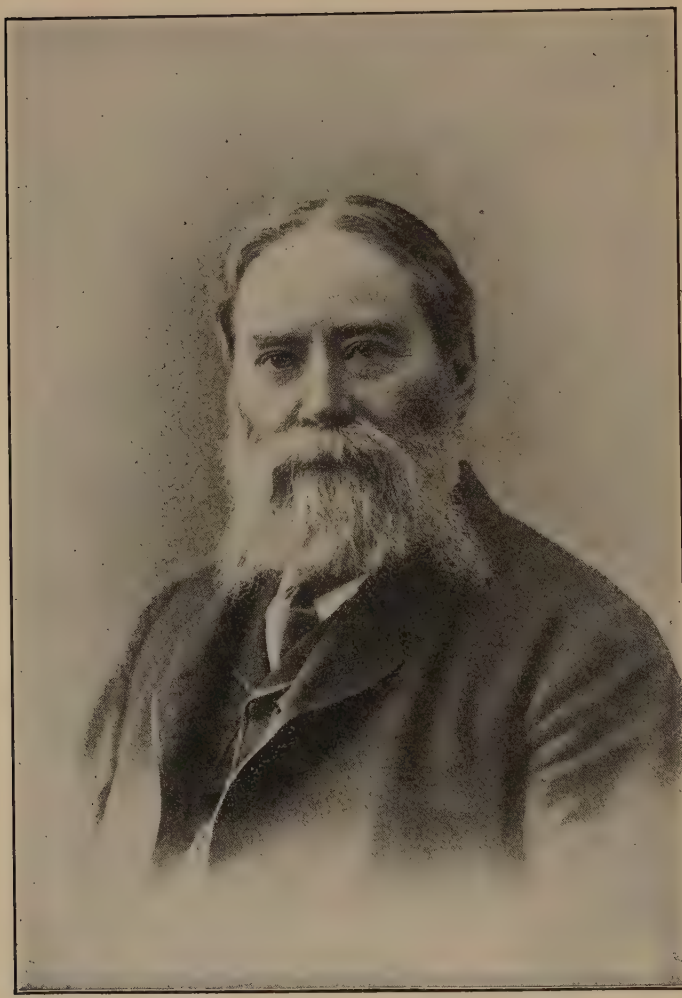
18. No poet in the English language writes poetry purer or otherwise more suitable for young people than Whittier. His publishers, recognising this fact, have prepared several "Whittier Collections" especially adapted for students. Among these may be mentioned:

(1) No. 4 of the "Riverside Literature" series, which contains "Snow-Bound," "Among the Hills," "Songs of Labour," and other poems, together with a biographical sketch, notes, map, portrait, pictures, etc. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 15 cents.)

(2) No. 5 of the same series, which contains "Mabel Martin," "Cobbler Keezar's Vision," "Maud Muller," and other poems, with additional matter similar to that of No. 4. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 15 cents.)

19. A volume in the "Riverside School Library" series contains "Snow-Bound," "The Tent on the Beach," and other poems, with notes, biographical sketch, portrait, and illustrations. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Half leather, 60 cents.)

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.



James Russell Lowell

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

1819-1891.

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY.

By John Ebenezer Bryant.

Lowell is America's most virile poet. He fails of being greatest in the volume and range of his achievement, which is neither large nor wide. His work, too, is uneven. Its excellence is not sustained. It lacks artistic completeness and finish. But in its best phases it is strong, virile, and inspiring to a degree not reached by any other American poet; to a degree, too, not reached by any contemporary poet save Browning.

Lowell's greatest work is his satire. As a satirist—that is to say, as a political satirist—he is unapproached by any contemporary—unapproached, indeed, by any modern save Butler and Dryden. But while in strength and directness of wit he is superior to Butler, in charm of humour and fancy he is infinitely superior to Dryden. Lowell, indeed, unites the humour and grace of the one with the wit and strength of the other. In the complete

effectiveness of his work he is not equalled by either. He thus stands unrivalled—the greatest political satirist of the English-speaking world.

Lowell had the true poet's love of nature. In this love he was far more richly endowed than any other American poet save Bryant; far more richly endowed than even Bryant was, for in Lowell the passion did not abate, but rather grew with his years. It was the sustaining force in all his work, and after his wit and humour his most distinguishing characteristic. The passion, too, was real; flowers, trees, brooks, rivers, meadows, woods, glens, mountains, even birds and animals, were the companions of his soul. He knew them as a mother knows her children, as a lover knows his mistress—and no mood of theirs was ever unloved by him. Even in his satires it was his familiarity with nature that supplied him with his strongest and most captivating images and metaphors. In all his poems, indeed, it is his personal, individual familiarity with nature as manifested in his own clime and his own country that made him the real virile poet, the true new-world poet, that he is, and not the mere verse-writing imitator of the poets of other lands and other climes which so many of his predecessors and contemporaries were.

"Jes' so with poets; wut they've airly read
Gits kind o' worked into their heart an' head,
So 's 't they can't seem to write but jest on sheers
With furrin countries or played-out ideers,
Nor hev a feelin', ef it doosn't smack
O' wut some critter chose to feel 'way back;

BIRTHPLACE AND HOME OF LOWELL.

The house dates from 1760.

This makes 'em talk o' daisies, larks, an' things,
Ez though we'd nothin' here that blows an' sings,—
(Why, I'd give more for one live bobolink
Than a square mile o' larks in printer's ink,)—
This makes 'em think our fust o' May is May,
Which 't ain't, for all the almanicks can say.
I, country-born an' bred, know where to find
Some blooms thet make the season suit the mind,
An' seem to metch the doubtin' blue-bird's notes,—
Half-vent'rin' liverworts in furry coats,
Bloodroots, whose rolled-up leaves ef you oncurl,
Each on 'em's cradle to a baby-pearl,—
But these are jes' Spring's pickets; sure ez sin,
The rebble frosts 'll try to drive 'em in;
For half our May's so awfully like May n't,
'Twould rile a Shaker or an evrige saint;
Though I own up I like our back'ard springs
Thet kind o' haggle with their greens an' things,
An' when you 'most give up, 'ithout more words
Toss the fields full o' blossoms, leaves, an' birds:
Thet's Northun natur', slow an' apt to doubt,
But when it doos get stirred, ther' 's no gin-out!"

With the great public, however, Lowell's force lay in his moral earnestness. Before the people he stood as the preacher of a new righteousness, the righteousness of purpose and deed, not that of mere faith and belief:

"The holy supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need;
Not what we give, but what we share—
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three—
Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me."

Unrighteousness is the neglect of opportunity—the failing to do what should be done:

"He's true to God who's true to man; whenever wrong is done
To the humblest and the weakest 'neath the all-beholding sun,
That wrong is also done to us, and they are slaves most base
Whose love of right is for themselves, and not for all their race."

"Then Christ sought out an artisan,
A low-browed, stunted, haggard man,
And a motherless girl, whose fingers thin
Pushed from her faintly want and sin.

"These set He in the midst of them,
And as they drew back their garment-hem,
For fear of defilement, 'Lo, here,' said He,
'The images ye have made of Me!'"

Lowell needed the inspiration of great occasions to impel him forth from himself. By nature he was unenergetic. According to his own testimony he was "indolent." Others have said he was "lazy." In his letters to Poe he speaks of his fault as constitutional, and one "not counteracted by proper training in childhood." In his earlier years the enthusiasm of a young man's ambition was sufficient to sustain him in efforts that resulted in such masterpieces as "The Heritage," "A Legend of Brittany," "An Indian Summer Reverie," "Extreme Unction," "To the Dandelion," and "The Vision of Sir Launfal." Other imperishable lyrics were due to emotions aroused by deep and undying personal sorrow, as, for example, "She Came and Went," "The Changeling,"

"The First Snowfall," "Auf Wiedersehen" and "Palinode." But it was in the great national movement against slavery, and especially in the great conflicts occasioned by that movement, that Lowell found the inspiration of his chief efforts. The first series of "The Biglow Papers" aroused the national conscience to a sense of the injustice of the Mexican War. The second series of "The Biglow Papers" inspired the national heart and sustained the national hope in the war of the great rebellion. What is probably Lowell's most exalted effort, the manifestation of his genius at its greatest strength, is that ode in which, as chosen poet of the nation, he commemorated (July 21, 1865) the nation's valour, and voiced the nation's joy and faith and resolution, in the supremest hour of her history—the hour of glorious victory:

"Bow down, dear land, for thou hast found release!
Thy God, in these distempered days,
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,
And through thine enemies hath wrought thy peace!
Bow down in prayer and praise!
No poorest in thy borders but may now
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised brow.
O Beautiful! My Country! Ours once more!
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
And letting thy set lips,
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
What words divine of lover or of poet
Could tell our love and make thee know it,
Among the Nations bright beyond compare?

What were our lives without thee?
What all our lives to save thee?
We reck not what we gave thee;
We will not dare to doubt thee,
But ask whatever else, and we will dare!"

But the war being over and slavery at an end, there remained no cause that vitally pressed on Lowell's heart, no wrong sufficiently flagrant to arouse his imagination in flights against it. The apostle of the gospel of unselfishness that he formerly had been, for a while he still continued to be, but with much less frequent manifestations of his energy and power. Even nature, that had been the most constant inspiration of his song, gradually failed to have her wonted influence upon his genius. His poetic efforts became fewer and more infrequent. In time he almost ceased to be a poet, but became instead a critic, a critic with a wonderful insight into the gifts and capacities, the limitations and deficiencies, of even the greatest writers, but, nevertheless, a critic still. And when finally he became minister at Madrid, and afterward at the court of St. James in London, though literature seemed to be crowned with honour, and poetry to be exalted before the nation, in reality, by that exaltation, literature gained no lasting good, and poetry, in America, lost the service of her strongest, her most gifted, son. Had he been content to remain the simple preacher of righteousness, the loving interpreter of nature, he once had been, Lowell's enduring hold upon the hearts of the people would have been far stronger, his position in the world's final estimate far higher.

James Russell Lowell was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, February 22, 1819. He was descended from Percival Lowell, of Bristol, England, who settled in Newbury, Massachusetts, in 1639, and became the progenitor of one of New England's most distinguished families. One member of the family founded the city of Lowell. Another established the Lowell Institute in Boston. James Russell Lowell's grandfather was one of the earliest of New England's anti-slavery heroes and the author of the constitutional instrument by which slavery was abolished in Massachusetts. His father, who was a distinguished Unitarian clergyman, was also an earnest anti-slavery agitator. Lowell's ancestry on his mother's side was equally remarkable for ability and character. His mother is described as having had a "passionate fondness for ancient songs and ballads," an "extraordinary aptitude for languages" and a "great memory." Of her children, two besides James Russell became poets and scholars.

Lowell's education was largely a self-obtained one. It is true he had the advantages of both school and college. He entered Harvard at the usual age and was graduated with the class of 1838. But he has told us he "read almost everything except the work prescribed by the faculty." His degree was given to him upon the credit of his well-known general ability and knowledge rather than for his specific attainments. His father's house was a scholar's home, and it was filled with books—books, too, of refinement and taste, in all those languages that a scholar loves, and young Lowell had browsed in them

luxuriously from childhood. He had enjoyed, too, an intimate intercourse with his father and with his father's many cultured friends. And, further, he had enjoyed the liberalising and upbuilding influence of an early and intimate familiarity with the world of outdoor nature; for Elmwood, his father's home, was endowed with ample grounds, where trees, and shrubs, and native flowers, and grassy spaces, in which every sort of wild bird had a home, made an environment of life and beauty, which Lowell's impressionable nature took the fondest delight in. It was by means of such influences as these, rather than by formal academic studies, that Lowell's mind was developed to play the part in life it did.

Lowell, upon his graduation, had purposed to follow the profession of law. He entered a law school, took the prescribed course, finished it, received his degree of LL.B., and opened an office in Boston. But literature had claimed him for her own, even at the beginning, and he was soon lost to law forever. Even during his undergraduate career he was known to be a votary of the singing muses, and was in consequence chosen poet of his class. Before he was twenty-two years old he had published his first volume of poems, its motto, "I have lived and loved," being the simple utterance of a fundamental fact in his life. The lady who had been the inspiration of his song and the object of his love (the "Una" to whom he had inscribed his verse) was Miss Maria White, a poet also, whom in 1844 he married. A short time before his marriage he had published a second volume of poems. As these comprised such masterpieces as

"Rhœcus," "The Shepherd of King Admetus," "The Heritage," and "A Parable," each of which has long since become a favourite with the people, they may be said to have established with the general public a reputation that previously had been confined to his classmates and friends. But in 1845 a great change occurred in the poet's career. He who had hitherto been content with lyrics and idyls, or at most with poems that portrayed the beauty and necessity of an altruistic life, now took upon himself a sterner part: he threw himself into the very heat of the conflict which, though it was then just beginning, was destined almost to rend the nation in twain. He had already in his sonnet "To Wendell Phillips" indicated, as with a sacramental utterance, on which side he himself would stand:

> "Fanatic named, and fool, yet well content,
> So he could be the nearer to God's heart,
> And feel its solemn pulses sending blood
> Through all the wide-spread veins of endless good."

But in December of that year, in "The Present Crisis," with the voice of a prophet, at once trumpet-toned and eloquent, Lowell urged upon his compatriots to join with him in the cause of right, in faith that in the end the right would prevail:

> "Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
> One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;

Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

The twenty-five years that succeeded the publication of "The Present Crisis" were Lowell's years of fruitage. "The Biglow Papers" were, of course, their richest yield. These were begun in June, 1846, as anonymous contributions to the *Boston Courier*. The first series continued for about three years. The second series was begun in November, 1861, as a supposed contribution to the *Atlantic Monthly*, of which, at that time, Lowell was editor. This series was continued for about five years. When the second series was ended the two were published in book form, with Lowell as acknowledged author. In the earlier series appeared the first sketch of that immortal idyl entitled "The Courtin'," which, by reason of its quaint and humorous description of what Sam Slick would call "human natur," is, perhaps, the most widely read poem Lowell ever wrote. In the second series of "The Biglow Papers" "The Courtin'" appeared in its completer form. Among other notable poems of this quarter century of fruitful production was the "Fable for Critics," published anonymously in 1848. In this unique composition Lowell's critical acumen, his wit, and his humour, conjoined to produce estimates of contemporary authors that, for all they were so amusing, were none the less decisive and final. Curious accompaniments of this frolicsome critique were its two

"rhymed prose" introductions. "The Vision of Sir Launfal," an inimitable landscape poem, with its never-forgotten line:

> "And what is so rare as a day in June?"

is also of this period. So, too, is "To the Dandelion," described as Lowell's one faultless poem, certainly one of the very finest nature poems every written. So, too, though of a later date, are those other nature poems published, as "Under the Willows" (1869). So, too, are those poems, previously mentioned, of sorrow—of sorrow not without hope, however—which commemorate the deaths of his children and wife. The war was, of course, the inspiration of its own series of poems. Finally, in the last poem of this period, "The Cathedral," published in 1870, his genius being then in its full maturity, Lowell, discussing the gravest themes that the mind of man can ponder, gives utterance to a faith in an unseen Power—

> "A Power more near my life than life itself"—

in words, perhaps, the noblest and most loftily sustained he ever penned.

> "If sometimes I must hear good men debate
> Of other witness of Thyself than Thou,
> As if there needed any help of ours
> To nurse Thy flickering life, that else must cease,
> Blown out, as 'twere a candle, by men's breath,
> My soul shall not be taken in their snare,
> To change her inward surety for their doubt,
> Muffled from sight in formal robes of proof:

While she can only feel herself through Thee,
I fear not Thy withdrawal; more I fear,
Seeing, to know Thee not, hoodwinked with thought
Of signs and wonders, while, unnoticed, Thou,
Walking Thy garden still, commun'st with men,
Missed in the commonplace of miracle."

Lowell's taste for literature and inborn critical faculty led him instinctively into the profession of editorship. In his college days he had been an enthusiastic editor of *Harvardiana*. In 1843 he founded a literary and critical magazine, to which he gave the appropriate name of *The Pioneer*. But though it was supported by such men of genius as Poe, Hawthorne, and Story (the sculptor and poet, a lifelong friend of Lowell's), it failed after three issues. In 1857 he became the editor of the *Atlantic*, and at once enlisted in his service Holmes, Emerson, Hawthorne, and Longfellow, Whittier, Agassiz, Motley, and Whipple, Sumner, Felton, Norton, and Dwight, Hillard, Hoar, Andrew, and Clarke, the flower of New England genius and ability. From 1863 to 1872 he was with his friend Prof. C. E. Norton joint editor of the *North American Review*. But Lowell's learning and literary accomplishments were far too rare to be permitted to remain with only one avenue of public exercise. In 1855, when Longfellow retired from his position as professor of modern languages at Harvard, Lowell was appointed to succeed him. He had already visited Europe and spent some time there; but, to further fit himself for discharging the duties of his new post, he now again spent two years in Europe. In 1857 he began his professorial work,

and he remained actively engaged in it for twenty years. As a university teacher no man, not even Longfellow, was ever more popular or more honoured. His critical and his constructive faculties being equally transcendent, he was to students at once a guide and an inspiration. But while his students gained the world lost. As years went on Lowell became less and less a poet, and more and more a prose writer. In his prose writings, too, he became less and less a constructive author, and more and more a critic. His first volume of prose, "Fireside Travels," published in 1864, but written eleven years earlier, in its grace and fancy, and its charm of naturalness, marked the beginning of a new epoch in American literature. The next, "My Study Windows" (1871), the work by which as a prose writer Lowell probably is best known, in its "My Garden Acquaintance," "A Good Word for Winter," and "On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners," contains masterpieces long since, by general consent, added to the world's imperishable store. The other essays of "My Study Windows," together with the two remaining volumes of his prose works, both entitled "Among My Books" (1871 and 1876), comprise Lowell's contribution to the literature of literary criticism. These have no parallel in American literature and are, indeed, but rarely paralleled in the literature of the world. In short, they place their author as a critic in rank with Matthew Arnold, Sainte-Beuve, Carlyle, and Goethe.

In 1877 Lowell was appointed by President Hayes United States minister at the court of Madrid. His learning, his accomplishments, his character, his dignified yet

courteous manners, his tact and judgment, all fitted him for such a post. His knowledge of Spanish literature and his acquaintance with the language (he both spoke and wrote Spanish with ease) rendered him peculiarly acceptable to the Spanish people. His official duties, however, were not onerous; and his incumbency of the post is chiefly remarkable for the unwonted wit and humour with which, during his stay, he enlivened his correspondence with the authorities at Washington. In 1880 he was transferred to London. It is scarcely too much to say that, as American minister in Britain, Lowell was successful and popular to a degree till then unequalled. His character, ability, attainments, accomplishments, and bearing, were in every way what the English people most respect and admire. One of the foremost men of letters then living, a poet, a critic, a wit, a humourist, a shrewd man of affairs, a dignified and courteous gentleman, a brilliant talker, an unequalled after-dinner speaker, on occasion a graceful and impressive orator, and withal of unblemished reputation and sincere Christian faith, Lowell possessed almost every title to consideration that Englishmen delight to honour. His friendships multiplied until he seemed to be more at home in London than in Boston. His acquaintanceship grew until no man in England was more widely seen in the exclusive country houses of the English people than he. At every function where literature was to be honoured—at banquets, commemoration festivals, unveilings of statues and monuments, etc.—he would be invited to take a leading part. And all without any loss of Americanism. His address

on "Democracy," delivered at Birmingham, in October, 1884, when at the very height of his English popularity, was the strongest defence before a foreign audience that Americanism has ever received. The faith that Holmes had in Lowell was justified: "You may get as much European epidermis as you like, but at heart you will always be an unchanged and unchangeable New Englander." But appointments to diplomatic positions are political ones. In 1885 a change of government took place at Washington, and Lowell returned home.

Lowell owed much to the woman who first won his heart. During his college course his life had been marked by somewhat more than its due share of youth's unsteadiness. On his graduation day he was not allowed to read the poem his class had elected him to prepare, the reason being that at that time he was under college discipline. It is said that even his degree was conferred upon him out of consideration for the feelings of his honoured father. The poem, too, that he wrote was a sort of "skit," directed chiefly against the very reformers whose ranks he afterward joined. But Miss White's influence changed the current of his life and set it toward the accomplishment of noble ends. She was of almost idyllic beauty, refined and spirituelle, sweet, gentle, and true-hearted, but of strong convictions and noble purposes. Upon his marriage to her Lowell became a new being. Their life together, however, though described as "ideally beautiful," was destined to be a short one. Mrs. Lowell was of delicate health from the very first. After a while two years were spent in Europe, but with no effect

in staying her gradual decline. Children had been born to them, but these, all but one, had passed away in infancy. Finally, after nine short years, the wife and mother passed away also (1853). On the day of Mrs. Lowell's death a child was born to Longfellow. The elder poet gave utterance to his sympathy in his beautiful poem, "The Two Angels":

"'Twas at thy door, O friend! and not at mine,
The angel with the amaranthine wreath,
Pausing, descended, and, with voice divine,
Whispered a word that had a sound like death.

"Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
A shadow on those features, fair and thin;
And softly from that hushed and darkened room,
Two angels issued where but one went in."

Thirteen years later Lowell expressed his love and faith in words of equal beauty and tenderness:

"If earth another grave must bear,
Yet heaven hath won a sweeter strain;
And something whispers my despair
That, from an orient chamber there,
Floats down: 'We meet again.'"

In 1857 Lowell made another happy marriage. His second wife, a lady of character and accomplishments, was the companion of his life while he was a professor at Harvard and while he was minister at Madrid and London. But she, too, was of delicate health, and predeceased him.[1] After his return from Europe Lowell's

[1] Mrs. Lowell died in London while her husband was minister. No children were born of the marriage.

position was still a quasi-public one. He continued to be the object of the same sort of honour that had been bestowed upon him in his English ambassadorship. His presence was sought for at every public function where dignified and graceful oratory upon noble themes would attract the public ear; and his words, wherever uttered, commanded the attention of the whole nation. But his constitution, never robust, soon showed signs of its natural frailty. The brightness of his eye, the alertness of his wit, remained the same as ever; but his trembling hand, his failing voice, and the growing transparency of his complexion, all showed clearly to those who loved him that a greater change was fast approaching. He felt, too, the loss of his lifelong friends. He never could pass Longfellow's house, so he used to say (it was near his own), "without a thrill." Emerson, too, was gone, and also Motley. Of his other most intimate friends Holmes and Norton seemed alone to remain. At last, August 12, 1891, the great change came. It took place at Elmwood, the house where he was born; the house that had been his father's, and where his father had lived till 1861; the house where he, too, had lived during all his life except the years that he had spent abroad.

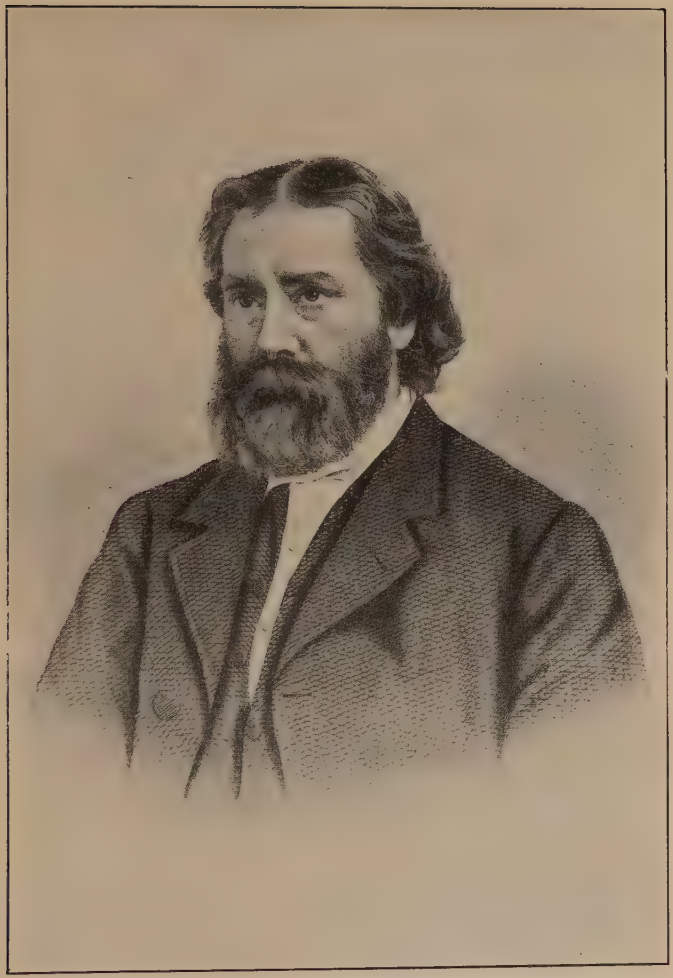
CRITICAL STUDY.

By Harriet L. Mason, A.M.,

Professor of English Literature, Drexel Institute, Philadelphia.

Lowell as a poet does not show that capacity for sustained workmanship necessary to give his verse the highest place among American poets. It has flashes, feeling, purpose, thought—but there is a carelessness about it as a whole that will forever keep it from becoming the best art. It is Lowell as a critic who will be longest remembered. To his work as critical essayist he brought that equipment of scholarship and feeling known as culture, but a culture of the old world engrafted with the mother-wit of the new. In the learning of a Macaulay was distilled the humour of New England. So unstinted and omnivorous had been his book-feeding, and so wonderful was his faculty of assimilation, that these essays of Lowell give a harvest of opinions not likely to be regathered. But the toil of such work can hardly be estimated—few can understand what research is represented in one of his pages.

Perhaps the first impression one gets of his prose is that it has remarkable vigour—the glow and enthusiasm



AN EARLY PORTRAIT OF JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

From an engraving.

of a scholar—the robustness of a scholar of the new world. This quality is never flagging—even in his very latest prose—so that it is no mere energy of youth, but energy of the individual. This is coupled with a brilliancy so constant as almost to divert the attention from the real soundness underneath. Rare judgments are clothed in such scintillations as:

"The Norman conquest was the bridge over which the culture of the continent passed into England."

"Marlowe was the herald who dropped dead in announcing the first fruits of victory."

"The air was heavy with the golden pollen of the Italian renaissance."

His sentences teem with references and allusions to all choice literature. Such a thinker cannot be a writer for dullards; to read him with pleasure is an evidence of a liberal education. Even the sciences are called upon to yield him effective rhetorical figures, as:

"Enthusiasm sublimates the understanding into imagination." "Disintegrate the wine by force of imagination, so as to taste the clustered beauty of the grape—all the sunburnt jollity of the vintage." "Chaucer had been in his grave 150 years ere England had secreted choice material enough for the making of another poet."

Sometimes the imagery is too dazzling; the illustrations are so numerous as to leave you breathless. The fact that his words suggest so much, together with the fact that one thought leads to another, that to another and so on —until he has strayed into by-paths—makes his style not

always clear. Prodigality and profusion is a rich fault, even though it may yield an embarrassment of material, but Lowell has always the sudden wit to take us back—and after all we have had a delightful escapade.

His diction is often freighted with words of other languages, both new and old, but he knew so many languages he could not help unconsciously drawing on them for his purpose. Everywhere you can find some happy critical characterisation condensed with a phrase or epithet, as: "Spenser's style is Venetian"; "the poet's fatally chosen words." And his critical estimates were independent and sure. No one could judge better what was original, for no man knew better what had been said once, and by whom. This was the reason why he could use the comparative method to the best advantage. In his essay on Milton he treats of the modes of Shakespeare, Milton, and Tasso. How prophetic this gift of analogy made him is instanced in the comparison he made between Lincoln and Henry IV. of France. This comparison was made before the assassination of the president had completed the parallelism of the two lives.

As a critic he is catholic and cosmopolitan, as much so as Edward Dowden. He is equally at home with the formality of Pope, and the mysticism of Dante; with Spenser, Carlyle, Keats, Goethe, Molière, Thoreau, and Emerson—his range only measures his sympathies. The essay on Dante gathers up all his personal communing with the exiled Florentine—and strengthens it by a knowledge of Italian history, literature, and atmosphere such as few people possess. To read his essays gives you

contact with the ripest culture—and a criticism that does not make the school-boy blunder of denying one kind of perfection because it is another. We cannot be too proud of Lowell, our typical man of letters, who has been the American apostle to bring the good tidings of "sweetness and light," and we may add freshness, into English literature.

REMINISCENCES AND CRITICAL STUDIES.

SELECTED

LOWELL'S FAMILY AND ANCESTRAL HOME.

THE family [of the poet] was in comfortable circumstances; the father was prudent and saving, and the children, though brought up in old-fashioned simplicity, never knew want. The house counted for much in the family happiness. It is sombre and without architectural beauty, but spacious and comfortable. It is set in an ample grassy field near Mount Auburn, just away from the travelled road, and is surrounded by tall, thick, sheltering trees and flowering shrubs. It is a fit retreat for a dreamer or philosopher, since no sound breaks the stillness except that of the wind in the pine boughs, and the songs of the many birds that lodge in the thick coverts. The place which this garden held in the poet's mind is shown in many poems and essays.—DR. FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD, *in "The Poet and the Man: Recollections and Appreciations of James Russell Lowell"* (Hou.).

LOWELL AT SCHOOL AND COLLEGE.

Lowell attended a good private school, and entered Harvard College in his sixteenth year; but he was a lag-

ging student, indifferent to reproof, and at last was rusticated. The place of his rustication was Concord, and he refers to it in "The Biglow Papers":

> "I know the village, though: was sent there once
> A-schoolin', cause to home I played the dunce."

He was still in banishment when the course was ending; and it is said he saw the out-door festivities of his class through a rift in the cover of a wagon in which he had surreptitiously returned. He had written verse while in college, and had been chosen class-poet, but, as the authorities refused to remit his sentence, the poem was printed and was not read by its author.

Lowell often spoke of this, but without bitterness; he felt that the action of the faculty was just. He said to the writer that while in college he was in the habit of reading all the books he came across, *excepting* those prescribed for his course of study, and that he was sure he would never have been allowed to take his degree if he had not been his father's son. He lamented this early perverseness, because there remained so much more to do before he could become a scholar.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S EARLY KNOWLEDGE OF LITERATURE AND BOOKS.

In his father's library Lowell came to know every rood in the long highway of English literature, besides making

some excursions in foreign territory. He had the prescience of genius, and assimilated all his eager eyes fell upon and his instinctive judgment approved. He read all manner of out-of-the-way things; and it was seldom in his maturer years that a book was named of which he did not know something.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood.

LOWELL'S CONVERSION TO THE ANTI-SLAVERY CAUSE.

Another development was in progress. From a gay youth, fond of chaffing, and ready to jeer at abolitionists, Lowell became a reformer and a devotee to spiritual life. No more complete renunciation of the "world" was ever made, as succeeding years were to show; and it was not an easy thing for a favourite of fortune, especially for one with such a buoyant nature. Love was the agent in this conversion. He had become enamoured of Miss Maria White, a young lady of rare beauty and noble character. She wrote poems of unusual merit, and one of them, "The Alpine Sheep," is widely known. Chiefly she was devoted to the anti-slavery cause, and made her influence felt. The change on the part of Lowell was not the passing whim of a lover, but became the steadfast purpose of a man. He came to see that slavery was a contradiction and lie in the constitution of a free country, and from that time his best efforts were devoted to its overthrow.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

"THEY LOVED EACH OTHER FROM THE BEGINNING."

Lowell first saw Maria White on the first of December, 1839. At the moment, I suppose, he did not know that it was pre-ordained that they two should be one. Mr. Norton has hunted out an early letter of his which he wrote the day after that meeting: "I went up to Watertown on Saturday with W. A. White, and spent the Sabbath with him. . . . His sister is a very pleasant and pleasing young lady, and knows more poetry than any one I am acquainted with. I mean, she is able to repeat more. She is more familiar, however, with modern poets than with the pure well-springs of English poesy." The truth is that their union was made in heaven, that it was a perfect marriage, that they belonged together and lived one life. She was exquisitely beautiful; her tastes and habits were perfectly simple; her education, as I look back on what I know of it, seems to me as perfect as any education can be. Her mother was one of the most charming women who ever lived. A cluster of sisters, of all ages down to romping little girls, young women of exquisite sensitiveness and character, and with such a training as such a mother would be sure to give, made the great Watertown house the most homelike of homes. In such a home Lowell found his beautiful wife, and they loved each other from the beginning.—Dr. Edward Everett Hale, *in "James Russell Lowell and his Friends"* (Hou.).

LOWELL'S CONVERSATION WHEN AMONG FRIENDS.

At the period following his great loss [that of his first wife] Lowell was naturally sobered, but still generally cheerful, and sometimes momentarily gay. His habitual manner had a mellow, autumnal glow. His serious conversation was suggestive and inspiring, and a sense of uplifting followed, as from seeing a play of Shakespeare, or hearing a symphony of Beethoven. But it was impossible for him to repress the bright fancies and droll conceits suggested by reading and conversation. Wit was as natural to him as breathing, and when the mood was on he could not help seeing and signalling puns. But epigrams and puns were the accompaniments, and not the end and aim of his conversation: his perceptions were keen and just; his reading had been well-nigh universal; and, with his instant power of comparison, his judgments were like intuitions. But his discourse often took on an airy and tantalising form, and wreathed itself in irony, or flowered in simile, or exploded in artifices, until it ended in some merry absurdity. Such play of argument, fancy, humour, word-twisting, and sparkling nonsense was seldom witnessed, except in the talk of the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S VARIED POWERS IN CONVERSATION.

The wit of Hosea Biglow was the native wit of Lowell —instantaneous as lightning; and Hosea's common sense

was Lowell's birthright, too. When the same man, moreover, could extemporise chuckling puns or blow out a breath of poetical reverie as naturally as the smoke from his pipe, the combination became almost marvellous. Other men may have been as witty, though we recall but three or four in our day; some may have had a similar fund of wisdom, mellowed with humour; others have talked like the staple of idyls and let off metaphors like soap bubbles; but Lowell combined in conversation the varied powers of all. His resources were inexhaustible. It is no wonder that he was admired; for at his best he was one of the most fascinating of men.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood, *in "James Russell Lowell: A Biographical Sketch."* (*Cf.* above.)

THE ATLANTIC DINNERS.[1]

For two years or more [after the starting of the magazine] the monthly dinners of the *Atlantic* contributors occurred on the day of publication. It is a misfortune that no notes were kept of the table-talk. The gatherings were memorable, and would have been memorable in any city of the world.

The bright, powerful, and inspired faces that sur-

[1] It was at a dinner given by the publishers (Phillips, Sampson & Co.), when all the leading authors invited to contribute were present, that Lowell was nominated editor-in-chief. The nomination was made by Dr. (then Mr.) Underwood, who had taken a prominent part in projecting the magazine. It was at the same dinner that Holmes proposed the name of the magazine (the *Atlantic*), and that Lowell stipulated that if he was to be editor Holmes must be a chief contributor. Dr. Underwood was the assistant editor.

rounded the ellipse come to mind almost like a sight of yesterday. . . . The group is immortal; the separate faces so many varying expressions of genius. Brilliant lights and softly luminous shades seem to play around the table, until the colours and forms are mingled as in the heart of a picture by Turner. There was Holmes in the flush of his new fame as the Autocrat—a man whose genius flamed out in his speech and expression as clearly as in his original and sparkling works. There was Lowell, with features of singular power, and eyes which dazzled and charmed. In merriment he was irresistible; in higher moods his face shone like a soul made visible. There was Emerson, thoughtful, but shrewdly observant, and with the placid look of an optimistic philosopher, whose smile was a benediction; Longfellow, with a head which Phidias might have modelled, by turns calm or radiant, seldom speaking, but always using the fit word; Agassiz, glowing with good humour, simple in phrase and massive in intellect; Whittier, with noble head and deep-set, brilliant eyes, grown spare and taciturn from ill-health, an ascetic at table, eager only for intellectual enjoyment; Quincy, with patrician air, curious learning, and felicity in epigram; Dwight, with the sky-reaching architecture of Beethoven's symphonies in his brain; Felton, Greek to his fingers' ends, happy in wise discourse and in Homeric laughter; Motley, stateliest man of his time, just about to depart for Europe, there to carry on his life-long work; Norton, the lecturer upon art, future editor of Carlyle's letters; Cabot, a veteran contributor to the *Dial;* Whipple, with two-storied head and bulbous spectacles, keen critic

and good talker. There were frequently other writers less known to fame.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood.

LOWELL'S GOOD ANGEL.

Lowell had never been a steady worker, which is not remarkable in a poet; beyond that he was dilatory and procrastinating to such a degree that, without some (carefully concealed) encouragement, he might have gone on indefinitely—

"Involved in a paulo-post-future of song."

His wife was surely his good angel, and the results of his labours after his second marriage show that he had been animated by new resolution. In writing a poem like "The Cathedral," there was great strain upon his vital forces, and when such a work was in progress her unobtrusive ministrations were soothing and sustaining.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

MRS. LOWELL—LOWELL IN ENGLAND.

In 1857 Mr. Lowell was married for the second time, to Miss Frances Dunlap, of Portland, Maine, who had had charge of the education of his daughter while he was abroad. They returned to the ancestral home at Elmwood soon after the marriage, and continued to reside there until the poet was appointed minister to Spain by President Hayes, when they repaired together to that

country. Upon his transfer to the Court of St. James, they removed to London, where both were universally and justly popular. Few ladies have received such warm encomiums in England as Mrs. Lowell, and few have as richly deserved them. No man whom our nation has sent to represent us in England has been so highly praised by the English press as Mr. Lowell, and probably no one has been so much liked by the class of people with whom he came chiefly in contact. There seemed to be much wonder in court circles there that America could produce so finished a gentleman as Mr. Lowell; and perhaps they had had some reason to doubt this, if they judged by the average American tourist. They wondered, too, at his delightful public speaking—a thing to which Englishmen are not as much accustomed as Americans. They have a heavy, laboured way of speaking, extremely painful to listeners accustomed to the ease of American speakers; and they were never weary of listening to the pleasing and graceful oratory of Mr. Lowell. He was called upon constantly to address the people, upon all sorts of occasions, and invariably received the highest praise for his efforts. Much regret was felt in England when he was called home; much also in this country by those who had the honour of the nation at heart, although the whole people were glad to welcome him back to his native land once more. Mrs. Lowell died during their residence in London, and the sympathies of the world went out to the husband in his affliction.—HATTIE TYNG GRISWOLD, *in "Home Life of Great Authors"* (Mg.).

LOWELL AND MRS. LOWELL.

Mrs. Lowell died in the spring of 1885, unexpectedly, of course, for death is always unexpected. "We had taken it for granted together that she would outlive me, and that would have been best." How many a man and woman have had to say something like that!

She had been an invalid, with critical ups and downs. But her unfailing sympathy for him and his work had never yielded, and those who remember him in the closest intimacies of London life always speak of her with tenderness. She was almost always shut up at home, and he was everywhere, among people of all sorts and conditions. But the very difference of their lives when they were parted seemed to make their companionship more tender when they were at home.—DR. EDWARD EVERETT HALE. (*Cf.* above.)

ELMWOOD.

The house is a large three-story structure, built of wood, and is eminently picturesque. The tone of the rooms is sombre, and the furniture is antique and solid. Nearly everything remains as it was in the poet's childhood; although the study has been removed from the second floor to two connected rooms on the first, spacious and impressive, and lined with well-selected books. The poet has lived in this house throughout his entire life—a thing which seldom happens to an American citizen. In the hall are ancestral portraits, a stately Dutch clock, and the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Lowell taken by Page in

their youth. The grounds about Elmwood have been kept as nearly as possible in a state of nature; they are ample, and filled with magnificent trees. The elms of Cambridge are among the most beautiful to be found anywhere, and on this estate, though not very numerous, there are fine specimens. In front of the house are splendid ash-trees, and a thick hedge of trees surrounds the whole enclosure. This hedge bristles with pines, droops with willows, and is overtopped by gigantic horse-chestnuts. Near the house are pines, elms, lilacs, syringas; and at the back, apple and pear trees. Huge masses of striped grass light up the thick turf here and there; and all over the grounds the birds, unmolested from time immemorial, build and sing in perfect freedom and content. Long ago Longfellow sang of the herons of Elmwood, and they are still to be found in the wooded slopes behind the house, where the Lowell children played in their happy childhood.—HATTIE TYNG GRISWOLD. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S OWN DESCRIPTION OF ELMWOOD.

Not long before his death, Lowell wrote to an English friend a description of Elmwood; and as he was very fond of the house in which he lived and died, it is agreeable to read words which strove to set it before the eyes of one who had never seen it. "'Tis a pleasant old house, just about twice as old as I am, four miles from Boston, in what was once the country and is now a populous suburb. But it still has some ten acres of open about it, and some fine old trees. When the worst comes to the worst (if I

live so long) I shall still have four and a half acres left with the house, the rest belonging to my brothers and sisters or their heirs. It is a square house, with four rooms on a floor, like some houses of the Georgian era I have seen in English provincial towns, only they are of brick, and this is of wood. But it is solid with its heavy oaken beams, the spaces between which in the four outer walls are filled in with brick, though you mustn't fancy a brick-and-timber house, for outwardly it is sheathed with wood. Inside there is much wainscot (of deal), painted white in the fashion of the time when it was built. It is very sunny, the sun rising so as to shine (at an acute angle, to be sure) through the northern windows, and going round the other three sides in the course of the day. There is a pretty staircase with the quaint, old twisted banisters—which they call balusters now; but mine are banisters. My library occupies two rooms, opening into each other by arches at the sides of the ample chimneys. The trees I look out on are the earliest things I remember. There you have me in my new-old quarters. But you must not fancy a large house—rooms sixteen feet square, and on the ground floor, nine high. It was large, as things went here, when it was built, and has a certain air of amplitude about it as from some inward sense of dignity."—HORACE E. SCUDDER, *in "Biographical Sketch of James Russell Lowell," prefixed to the "Cambridge Edition" of Lowell's "Poems."*

LOWELL IN THE PRACTICAL WORK OF EDITING.

Let me say a word about any presumption that Lowell was a mere figurehead, and that some one else did the work.[1] Trust me, for I know. I have worked under many editors, good and bad. Not one of them understood his business better than Lowell, or worked at its details more faithfully. I think he hated to read manuscripts as much as any man of sense does. In those days there was practically no type-writing. I think that, like any man of sense, he would prefer to write an article than to read the average "contribution." But he had said he would do it, and he did it—up to time, so far as I have seen, careful in detail even to the least detail, and he had no reason to be ashamed of his work when he was done. —Dr. Edward Everett Hale. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S KINDNESS IN HELPING OTHERS.

To the end of his life, Lowell's conversation, and his daily walk indeed, were swayed by the extreme tenderness for the feelings of others which his sister[2] noticed when he was a little boy. He would not give pain if he could help it. He would go so much more than half way in trying to help the person who was next him that he would permit himself to be bored, really without knowing that he was bored. He would overestimate, as good men and great men will, the abilities of those with whom he

[1] That is, of editing the *Atlantic Monthly* or the *North American Review*.

[2] "His mother had the sense, the courage, and exquisite foresight which placed the little boy, almost from his birth, under the personal charge of a

had to do. So his geese were sometimes swans, as Mr. Emerson's were, and those of other lovers of mankind. —Dr. Edward Everett Hale. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S GOOD HUSBANDRY OF HIS FAME AND NAME.

Lowell wrote with extreme care, but none of his prose appeared in book form until after it had been kept, considered, and carefully gone over. He was inaccessible to offers of money for articles or poems; and in the last years of his life enormous sums were named as ready for any contributions from his pen. But he wrote only when a subject came to him naturally, and when to write was a pleasure and a duty. Had he been avaricious, or even reasonably "thrifty," he could have earned a large income. As it was, he earned enough for his wants, and wrote enough for his fame. Some of the possessors of great incomes from literature find in the end that their wealth is their chief reward; fame being chary of laurels, and seldom bestowing them on those who abuse her patience. Lowell left a small estate, but a good name, which is better than riches.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

sister eight years older. Mrs. Putnam died on the 1st of June, 1898, loving and beloved, after showing the world in a thousand ways how well she was fitted for the privileges and duties of the nurse, playmate, companion, philosopher, and friend of a poet. She entered into this charge, I do not know how early —I suppose from his birth."—Dr. E. E. Hale.

LOWELL IN OFFICIAL LIFE.

To the minds of many of his countrymen Lowell seemed doubtless a dilettante in politics. Special preparation in diplomacy he had not, but he had what was more fundamental, a large nature enriched by a familiar intercourse with great minds, and so sane, so sound in its judgment, that whether he was engaged in determining a reading in an Elizabethan dramatist or in deciding to which country an Irish colossus belonged, he was bringing his whole nature to the bench. No one can read Lowell's despatches from Madrid and London without being struck by his sagacity, his readiness in emergencies, his interest in and quick perception of the political situation in the country where he was resident, and his unerring knowledge as a man of the world. Nor could Lowell lay aside in his official communications the art and the wit which were native to him. "I asked Lord Lyons," he writes in one letter, "whether he did not think suzerainty might be defined as 'leaving to a man the privilege of carrying the saddle and bridle after you have stolen his horse.' He assented."—HORACE E. SCUDDER, *in "Biographical Sketch."* (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL S PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER.

Lowell was the most companionable of men, and shared his large gifts with chance acquaintance so freely that one sometimes wondered what he saved for more intimate friends; and yet his fine reserve was apparent even

to those who knew him best. The humour which underlies so much even of his stately verse was a constant quantity in his temperament, closely allied with shrewd sagacity; the sentiment and fancy which find expression sometimes in an entire poem, more often in phrase and line, played about his conversation in familiar intercourse; but as his verse when read in its fulness is charged with noble passion and with an imagination in which human experience and personal emotion are fused in a high ideal, so no one could long be with the poet without recognising that he was in the presence of a character which combined the unflinching earnestness of the puritan with the mellowness of a man of the great world.—HORACE E. SCUDDER, *in* "*Biographical Sketch.*" (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL S HEIGHT, SIZE, AND MOVEMENTS.

In person Lowell was of medium height, rather slender, but sinewy and active. His movements were deliberate rather than impulsive, indicating what athletes call staying qualities. His hair at maturity was dark auburn or ruddy chestnut in colour and his full beard rather lighter and more glowing in tint. The eyes of men of genius are seldom to be classified in ordinary terms, though it is said their prevailing colour is gray. Lowell's eyes in repose had clear blue and gray tones, with minute dark mottlings. In expression they were strongly indicative of his moods. When fixed upon study, or while listening to serious discourse, they were grave and penetrating; in

ordinary conversation they were bright and cheery; in moments of excitement they had a wonderful lustre. Nothing could be finer than his facial expression while telling a story or tossing a repartee.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S FACE AND EYES.

Before Lowell had become worn with study his face was usually radiant with smiles. His eyes were searching at times, but benevolent, especially to people of low degree. A servant in the writer's house who had admitted Lowell one evening, said to her mistress in *naïve* admiration: "I declare, ma'am, Mr. Lowell has the *coaxinest* eyes I ever see wid a man." At that period he was nearing the acme of his powers.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood.

LOWELL'S KEEN ZEST FOR THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE.

Lowell used to enter upon the long walks which aided in making him one of the poets of nature with the keenest zest. There was no quicker eye for a bird or squirrel, a rare flower or bush, and no more accurate ear for the songs or the commoner sounds of the forest. Evidences of this the reader will find in the "Study Windows." But those who have visited Fresh Pond, Clematis Brook, Love Lane, or the Waverley Oaks, in his company, remember an acuteness of vision, and a delight in every form of beauty, of which the essay gives no conception.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood.

LOWELL'S ENORMOUS READING.

Lowell's habits were scarcely methodical, reading, correspondence, composition, exercise, and social converse coming often haphazard, yet, being incapable of idleness, he accomplished much. His reading was enormous, covering the literature of many centuries and times; from Marco Polo to Dr. Kane; from Piers Plowman to Swinburne; from the Christian fathers to Channing; from Boccaccio and Cervantes to Thackeray; from Froissart to Motley; and this gave him the material indispensable to a great writer. His works showed the effective use he made of the intellectual treasures of the world.—DR. FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD (*written in* 1882).

"TO HAVE KNOWN HIM WAS A LIBERAL EDUCATION."

Steele said of a lady that to have known and loved her was a liberal education. More than one man who enjoyed Lowell's society found that the wise and witty converse of years did much to supply lamented defects in his own study and training, and perhaps warmed even late flowering plants into blossoms and fruitage. This also should be said, that every man who knew Lowell well considered him much greater than the aggregate of his works. He always gave the impression of power in reserve and of the probability of still higher achievement.—DR. FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD (*written in* 1882). (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL JUST BEFORE HIS DEATH.

I asked him, knowing well his love for England, which nation was dearest to him. "Well, my own land, of course. And yet I have more friends on your side than I have here. I can never pass Longfellow's house, which, as you know, is close by here, without a thrill. Then Emerson has gone, too. We are all going, you know; the old order changeth, giving place to new, and yet it is all as it should be, all for the best. Oliver Wendell Holmes, gay youth that he is, often comes over to chat with me." I remarked that I had spent the previous afternoon with the old autocrat. I told him what he had said to me about his age: "There are times when I don't feel it, but you must catch the old man asleep, you must watch him come down the stairs. You can't cheat old age." "No," replied Mr. Lowell, "that is true, of course. I am not many years his junior, but yet I don't feel old; I don't feel my age as I am told by books I ought to feel." I ventured to ask him how old he was. I could scarcely believe him when he replied: "Seventy-two years."—RAYMOND BLATHWAYT, *in a paper entitled "A Last Interview with James Russell Lowell"* (Rev. of Rev.).

LOWELL'S SOCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE EPITOMISED.

In the way of biography, of which little can be novel to the reader, it is enough to recall to mind the general

course of Lowell's life; how he founded the *Atlantic*, which was to prove a diary of the contemporary literary age; and in the Lowell Institute first displayed on a true scale the solidity and acuteness of his critical scholarship, and gave material aid to the national cause and the war on slavery, as he had always done, by his brilliant satire, his ambushing humour and more marvellous pathos; and became the Harvard professor, succeeding Longfellow; and after a residence in Leipsic settled again at Elmwood to give fresh books to the world, and to be, perhaps, the most memorable figure in the minds of several generations of Harvard students. Nor can one leave unmentioned the more familiar features of the social life in these years of his second marriage—a life somewhat retired and quiet but filled full of amiability, wit, and intellectual delight, led partly in Longfellow's study, or in the famous Saturday Club, or in the weekly whist meetings, and partly in Elmwood itself. That past lives in tradition and anecdotage, and in it Lowell appears as the life and spirit of the wine, with a conversational play so rich in substance and in allusion that, it is said, one must have heard and seen with his own ears and eyes before he can realise that what seems the studied abundance and changeableness of his essays is in fact the spontaneity of nature, the mother-tongue of the man.—Prof. George E. Woodberry, *in "James Russell Lowell at Elmwood," in "Authors at Home"* (Cas.).

THE LOWELL INSTITUTE, BOSTON.

In 1853 Lowell was invited to deliver a course of lectures before the Lowell Institute. These lectures were eventually delivered in January and February of 1855.

Because the great system of public instruction which is carried on by this Institute bears the name of his family [that is, Mr. Lowell's family], I will give some little account of it here. Stimulated by the success of what we have been speaking of, the lyceum system of the Northern States, John Lowell, Jr., a cousin of James Russell Lowell, had founded this Institute. His wife and all his children had died. His own health was delicate, and he undertook a long journey abroad. While in Egypt he made his will, in which he left $250,000 for the beginning of a fund for carrying on public instruction by means of lectures. It is said that it was executed literally under the shadow of the ruins of Luxor.

By this instrument he left to trustees the sum which has been named, the interest of which should be expended for maintaining free public lectures for the instruction of any who should choose to attend. The will provided that nine-tenths of the income should be thus expended for the immediate purposes of every year. The remaining tenth is, every year, added to the principal fund. The investments have been carefully and successfully made, and as the will went into effect in the year 1839, the fund is now very much larger than it was when he died.

It has been admirably administered from the beginning. The first Americans in the walks of science or of literature

have been proud to be enrolled on the list of its lecturers, and in many instances the most distinguished savants from Europe have been called over with the special purpose of lecturing to its audiences.—Dr. Edward Everett Hale. (*Cf.* above.)

HOW "THE BIGLOW PAPERS" EXERTED THEIR INFLUENCE.

Lowell was one day [in 1846] in a lawyer's office in Court Square, Boston, when there was heard without the unusual sound of fife and drum. It soon appeared that it was a call for volunteers for a Massachusetts regiment, and the poet's quick indignation rose; but his good sense and native humour soon got the better of his wrath. His friends in the office, one of whom related the incident to the writer, long remembered the keen light in his eyes, and his caustic comments upon the humiliating scene. A few days later in the *Boston Courier* appeared anonymously the first poem of "Hosea Biglow," introduced with grave and felicitous humour by "Rev. Homer Wilbur," delighting the anti-slavery party, and gradually setting the whole Northern people in crepitating chuckles of laughter. It was in France where once an epigram might shake a throne. Men upon whom the inflexible logic of Garrison was wasted, who had listened unmoved to the matchless eloquence of Wendell Phillips, and read with indifference the burning verse of Whittier, gave in without parley to this new assault. Every one felt that this ballad embodied the common sense, the religious con-

victions, the puritan *grit*, and the humane feelings of the North. The concentrated energy was resistless. But it was something more; the sharp thrusts in rustic phrase, the native wit, and the irony which played upon the lines, making them like live electric wires, produced a combination of mirth and conviction that was wholly new. Unlike the unheeded logic, eloquence, and burning verse, the comic and catching rhymes went everywhere as on wings; and while men repeated the drolleries the deeper import sank into their hearts.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL HAS PRESERVED FOR THE WORLD THE YANKEE DIALECT.

A man born since 1850 could not have written a page of "The Biglow Papers," nor told the inimitable "Fitz Adams Story." That old time has gone by. It would be difficult to find, except in remote and unfrequented settlements, any survival of the customs and speech which Lowell has so vividly depicted; so that the dialect of "The Biglow Papers" has become almost obsolete to the younger generation of readers.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood.

"THE BIGLOW PAPERS" THE WITTIEST SATIRE IN ENGLISH.

"The Biglow Papers" is like no other book; the comedy begins with the title page, and overruns the in-

dex. "The Notices of an Independent Press" are delightful burlesques of the methods of certain newspaper reviewers. The prefaces, notes, and comments are in perfect keeping; serious in one view, jocose in another; there is a back-handed stroke in them all. It is not risking much to say that it is the wittiest and best-sustained satire in English.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood.

LOWELL, HOSEA BIGLOW, AND THE YANKEE DIALECT.

"The Biglow Papers" are unique in our literature. Lowell adds to his other merits that of being an accomplished philologist; but granting his scholarship as an investigator of the popular idioms of foreign speech, he must be principally esteemed for his knowledge of the Yankee dialect. Hosea Biglow is almost the only writer who uses the dialect properly, and most other pretenders to a knowledge of it must be considered caricaturists as compared with him; for Biglow, like Burns, makes the dialect he employs flexible to every mood of thought and passion, from good sense as solid as granite to the most bewitching descriptions of nature and the loftiest affirmations of conscience.—Edwin P. Whipple, *in "American Literature"* (Hou.).

LOWELL AND HOSEA BIGLOW ONE.

"The Biglow Papers" have often been pronounced the best specimen of New England dialect ever written;

and so they are. But it is not merely the dialect that they render; it is the whole New England character. Here is the living Yankee, talking right on. It amuses us, now and then, to hear our English cousins say of Mr. Lowell as Professor Dowden does, for instance, that he "seems an English poet who has become a naturalised citizen of the United States." The truth is, that Mr. Lowell, like a good many other excellent Englishmen, was naturalised in this country about two hundred and fifty years ago. He was a typical New Englander—a proof of how much ripening culture the Yankee character can take without losing its native raciness and flavour. For Hosea Biglow was no laboured dramatic study—his other name was Lowell. The dry waggery, imperturbable good humour, eye for homely out-of-door beauty, deep but shy affections, shrewdness and resource, tenacity of purpose, dogged sense of justice, insistence on moral values—Lowell had them all. And his verse, truth to say, however refined and imaginative, never seemed so apt and spontaneous as when it slid into the homely phrase of Biglow. He really put more of himself into these "Biglow Papers" than into anything else he ever wrote. And nothing else he ever wrote will live so long. —Prof. C. T. Winchester, *in a paper entitled "Lowell as a Man of Letters"* (Rev. of Rev.).

LOWELL'S ANNUS MIRABILIS.[1]

Lowell the editor, abolitionist, religious liberal, critic, diplomat, is also the writer of that noble allegory of good

[1] 1848. "The Present Crisis" is dated December, 1844.

deeds, "The Vision of Sir Launfal," with its lofty lesson and its warm glow of idyllic sunshine. All at once, forty years ago, his rich mind could give the world an intellectual and moral store so varied as that of this evenly presented "Vision"; the stern political warning of "The Present Crisis"; the pungent satire—though sometimes coarsely written for quick effect—of the first series of "The Biglow Papers," in which he taught his readers to love the New England fields, and to hate the pro-slavery Mexican War; and the swift survey of our nascent literature proffered in the unsurpassed "Fable for Critics." Work at once so rapid and so good never came otherwise, within so brief a period, from an American pen.—Prof. Charles F. Richardson, *in* "*American Literature*, 1607-1885" (Put.).

LOWELL'S VERSE PRODUCED AT A WHITE HEAT.

In this same year, 1848,[1] Lowell sent forth also "The Vision of Sir Launfal," his first attempt at telling a story in verse. It is the best of all his serious poems; perhaps loftier in conception and more careful in execution. His habit then, as always, was to brood over the subject he wished to treat in verse, to fill himself with it, to work himself up to a white heat over it, and finally to write it out at a single sitting if possible. He rarely revised, and his verse lacked finish and polish, though it never wanted force. It was at this time that he told Longfellow he

[1] The year of publication of the first series of "The Biglow Papers" and of "The Fable for Critics."

meant to give up poetry because he could "not write slowly enough."—Prof. Brander Matthews, *in "An Introduction to the Study of American Literature"* (Am.).

"The Biglow Papers" and "The Vision of Sir Launfal."

The contrast between "The Biglow Papers" and the class of poems represented by "The Vision of Sir Launfal" is very great. Few poets in the history of literature have produced works so antithetical in every respect. "The Biglow Papers," with their utter disregard for polish and literary art, with their burning satire, their intense convictions, and their irresistible humour, reveal Lowell in his native dress. We see in these poems the true Lowell, pouring his message from his heart without a thought of effect or of art, as did Burns and Whittier. In "The Vision of Sir Launfal" we lose sight of the poet, but we see in every line a refinement of touch that could have been gained only by careful study and by long contact with the rarest in art. "Sir Launfal," in its exquisite workmanship, in its sentiment, its lofty conception, its descriptions, is without question "the high-water mark of American poetry."—Prof. Fred. Lewis Pattee, *in "A History of American Literature"* (Sil.).

"The Fable for Critics."

Never in the New World was there a parallel instance of exultant audacity. It is the gay humour of a youth in

the freedom of an anonymous pasquinade—revelling in puns, clashing unexpected and all-but-impossible rhymes like cymbals, tossing off grotesque epithets and comparisons, and going in a break-neck canter, like that of a racehorse let loose. And yet, underneath the fun and riot, we find outline portraits and swift estimates which, though not always wholly just, are of marvellous acuteness and force. Some of the sketches—for instance, those of Emerson, Parker, Willis, Hawthorne, and Whittier—in their general faithfulness and power of discrimination, are the most lifelike miniatures ever made of these men. The sharp and philosophic discrimination between Emerson and Carlyle, done so long ago as 1848, and by a youth of twenty-nine, is something to think of. The uproar raised by lesser authors, who were omitted, and by friends of Margaret Fuller, who was thought to be lampooned as *Miranda*, subsided in time; and to-day most critics agree that this early satirical view of American literature was singularly just and prophetic, and that its hard hits and sharp reproofs were salutary. Its main counsel is to avoid imitation of foreign models, to be true to the ideas of the democratic New World, to be independent in thought and modest in expression, and to wait for the development of a worthy literature and art at home. Excepting "The Biglow Papers" and "The Vision of Sir Launfal," this poem is probably more read in the United States than any other production of Lowell's. Many of his admirers know it by heart.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

EIGHT OF LOWELL'S BEST POEMS.

As a sentimentalist, Lowell's public has been more limited than Longfellow's or Whittier's. From his verse of sentiment or imagination or more frequent fancy one can select a goodly list of meritorious poems, but most of them are not widely known. They are not indispensable, as the best poetry must always be, and as his "Auf Wiedersehen," "Das Ewig-Weibliche," "The Changeling," "The First Snow-Fall," "The Courtin'," "After the Burial," "The Miner," and "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration" seem to be. Most of us would be content to have written these eight alone, or even the last, the best American poem of occasion, and the chief literary result of the Civil War.—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON. (*Cf.* above.)

THE SECOND SERIES OF "THE BIGLOW PAPERS."

The new series [of "The Biglow Papers"] is wholly occupied with matters connected with the war, and naturally wants much of the comic relief of its predecessor; but it is an error to think it inferior as poetry. Probably the most forcible part is that in which the poet deals with the course of Great Britain in favouring the Rebellion—the dialogue between Concord Bridge and Bunker's Hill Monument—followed by the regretful, manly, and ringing reproaches in "Jonathan to John." The prefatory letter of *Parson Wilbur* is, in its way, a more effective statement of the case of the seizure of Mason and Slidell

than any made by Secretary Seward. Two other poems of the series (Nos. 6 and 10) should be mentioned, because they are at Lowell's high-water mark, and cannot be easily paralleled in verse of our time. "Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line" contains pictures of spring in the country which in completeness, felicity, and vividness excel all his descriptions in serious verse. It is an almanac of blossoms and bird-notes, with scarcely a blank page left for a continuator. *Hosea's* interview with a puritan ancestor, which forms the sequel, is in the poet's most vigorous manner. . . . "A Letter to the Editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*" (No. 10) is a poem of which no description can give an adequate notion.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S NATURE LYRICS AND "THE BIGLOW PAPERS" HIS BEST WORK.

Lowell was first of all a poet. His literary criticism, exquisite as it is, is inferior to his best poetical efforts. His best poems are his nature lyrics and his "Biglow Papers." Few poets have caught so well the true poetry of nature—the joy of June, the tipsy rapture of the bobolink, the song of the bluebird, and the icy breath of winter. In "The Biglow Papers" we have the very heart and soul of New England rural life. "No richer juice can be pressed from the wild grape of the Yankee soil." These poems will tolerate no imitation; the Yankee dialect as a literary property was discovered by Lowell, and its discoverer spoke the last word concerning it. "The Biglow Papers" are without question Lowell's most orig-

inal and most permanent contribution to American literature.—PROF. FRED. LEWIS PATTEE. (*Cf.* above.)

THE WEALTH OF THOUGHT IN LOWELL'S POETRY—ITS BLEMISH.

Few readers know what deep and rich philosophy, what fruits of thought and culture, are to be found in some of Lowell's work; for instance, in "Columbus," "Beaver Brook," "On a Portrait of Dante by Giotto," "Stanzas on Freedom," "The Ghost-Seer," "Prometheus," and a dozen others as good. If our literature shall ever fade and die in the coming centuries, and some future reader shall stumble upon Lowell's books, he will easily and excusably wax highly enthusiastic over the unquestionable wealth of thought therein discovered. As he founds a new cult, he may confidently exclaim, in Lowell's own language:

> "Great truths are portions of the soul of man;
> Great souls are portions of eternity."

And yet there is a sad possibility that he will at length see the blemish of too many of these poems, the blemish expressed by that most coldly satirical of criticisms: "Words, words, words."—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S CARELESSNESS AND HURRY AS AN ARTIST.

There is no use in denying or minimising this fact,[1] to which must be added the equally apparent fault of careless

[1] Lowell's "excessive verbiage."

expression on Lowell's part. Not often, in the history of poetry, does one find a poetical product at once so genuinely valuable and so annoyingly irregular. It is easy, of course, to name a dozen poets who have written too much or too hastily—who is exempt from one or the other fault? But in Lowell's verse there is a peculiar and an aggravating variety of impulsive ideas and swift expressions. Force and fire are secured on the one hand, at the expense, perhaps, of the consistency of art. An artist may fail, like Tennyson in his dramas; but at least Tennyson does his best—the failure is likely to be inherent in the singer or his theme. There is in Tennyson, now and then, a misapprehension, perhaps grotesquely complete, a fall, perhaps pitiful; but it is not one of carelessness or hurry. A close study and minute analysis of Lowell's language, whether in prose or verse, bring promptly to view an array of errors which cannot be paralleled in the works of Emerson, Bryant, Longfellow, or Hawthorne, his fellow-workers and contemporaries. A scholar of thorough culture in more than one field, he vexes the refined sense as truly as Whitman and more often than Whittier.—Prof. Charles F. Richardson. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S TENDENCY TO MORALISING.

Lowell's poetry also suffered from another failing of his. He was not content to set forth beauty only and to let the reader discover a moral for himself. Like Longfellow sometimes and like Whittier often, Lowell insisted unduly on the burden of his song. And he knew his own

defect, and wrote later in life: "I shall never be a poet till I get out of the pulpit, and New England was all meeting-house when I was growing up."—PROF. BRANDER MATTHEWS, *in "An Introduction to American Literature."* (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S REDEEMING WIT AND SPONTANEITY.

But James Russell Lowell is a wit and a genius: wit sparkles through whole essays and long poems, and in the best parts of "A Fable for Critics" or "The Biglow Papers" it fairly proves that it *is* genius. Who would exchange such results, so brilliant and so illuminating, for a ten-fold number of machine-essays or Odes to Propriety? The very faults are human and helpful. Lowell is a poet of freedom, of nature, and of human nature. His intellectual freaks and sallies are those of a patriot and reformer, a man whose spontaneity is better than his imitativeness or his deliberateness. We could not have had the "Commemoration Ode," or "The Courtin'," or even "The Vision of Sir Launfal," from a man without a human heart and brain. And time, in his case, will once more carry forward the slow and unerring process of saving from the mass the select literary "remnant" of the lastingly valuable.—PROF. CHARLES F. RICHARDSON. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL IN ENGLAND—LOWELL'S AMERICANISM.

No American minister ever made himself more welcome among a foreign people than Lowell made himself

among the British. And his popularity was not due to any attempt to please their prejudices; Lowell abated not a jot or tittle of his Americanism—rather on occasion did he accentuate it. In sending him to Great Britain the United States sent the best we had. Our kin across the sea were quick to understand the opportunity offered to them; and by their request Lowell delivered in England many public addresses, some of them formal orations, while others were but offhand after-dinner speeches. But whatever the occasion, Lowell was equal to it, never more amply than when he went to Birmingham to make an exposition of the theory and practice of "Democracy" in America. Nowhere more plainly than in England was Lowell's Americanism seen to be ingrained. With him patriotism was almost a passion.—PROF. BRANDER MATTHEWS. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL ONE OF THE FOREMOST CITIZENS OF THE REPUBLIC.

As Lowell drew near to the allotted limit of threescore years and ten he was everywhere recognised as one of the foremost citizens of the republic, a type of the character most needed in American public life—the man of broad culture, having a solid understanding of his fellowmen and a deep love of his country. Probably the later years of his life were made pleasanter by this appreciation.—PROF. BRANDER MATTHEWS.

LOWELL'S TRUTH AND HOMELINESS AS A POET.

Setting aside foreign "larks and daisies," and all conventionality, Lowell set himself to sing of the birds and flowers he knew, the landscapes and the men he had seen, the speech he had heard, and the unborrowed feelings of his own soul. His verse, therefore, excepting that of his earliest years, is no echo of English poetry, although he was master of its manifold vocabulary. In respect to his truth to nature, he is the most American of poets, unless it may be Whittier.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S HIGHER POETRY AT FIRST DISTASTEFUL.

Though the comedy and satire of Lowell were immediately recognised, his serious poems were appreciated by few until long after they were published. Setting aside the inveterate party prejudice which cast a cloud over all he wrote, there was something in his verse which left common readers in bewilderment or indifference. It was a new combination of elements, and it was distasteful to all whose souls had not been "touched to finer issues." —Dr. Francis H. Underwood.

LOWELL'S TWENTY YEARS OF LITERARY CRITICISM.

These twenty years, from 1857 to 1877, were the most productive period of Lowell's literary activity. He was in the maturity of his mental power, he held a con-

venient position in university life, his home relations were congenial and stimulating, and his collegiate work, as well as his editorial charge successively of the *Atlantic* and *North American*, gave him a needed impulse to literary effort. During this period appeared the most of that body of literary history and criticism which marks him as the most distinguished of American critics. Any one reading the titles of the papers which comprise the volumes of his prose writings will readily see how much literature, and especially poetic literature, occupied his attention. Shakespeare, Dryden, Lessing, Rousseau, Dante, Spenser, Wordsworth, Milton, Keats, Carlyle, Percival, Thoreau, Swinburne, Chaucer, Emerson, Pope, Gray—these are the principal subjects of his prose, and the range of topics indicates the catholicity of his taste. These papers are the rich deposit of a mind at once sympathetic and discriminating, capable of enjoying to the full the varied manifestations of life in literature, and combining judicial fairness with keen critical insight.—HORACE E. SCUDDER. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL THE GREATEST OF AMERICAN CRITICS.

Lowell was the greatest of all American critics of literature. He had knowledge and wisdom, culture and sagacity. His writing has the leisurely amplitude of the scholar and the sharp thrust of the wit. The gift of the winged phrase was his; and no man of our time ever packed truth oftener into an epigram. He had also the wide and deep acquaintance with literature which is the

best backbone of criticism. So fine was his scholarship, and so broad his cultivation, that he was wholly devoid of petty pedantries; he had too sure a sense of proportion to confuse trifling facts with truths of real importance.—Prof. Brander Matthews. (*Cf.* above.)

THE "LITERARY ESSAYS."

From every page of these essays shine forth evidences of rare scholarship, a wide and varied acquaintance with literature, a refined taste, a sound judgment, and a delicate humour. To one who can read them they are delightful. They were not designed to be popular in the broad sense—only the few can enjoy them. They imply in the reader a wide range of study and reading and a taste for the best in literature. Lowell's style is suggestive rather than direct. The reader must often use his imagination or lose the most subtle part of the author's thought. The figures, too, and the allusions, take for granted on the reader's part a broad acquaintance with mythology, history, and general literature. To the uneducated Lowell's critical essays must ever remain a closed book, but to those who can judge of them they are without question one of the rarest creations of the century in their field.—Prof. Fred. Lewis Pattee. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S BEST POEMS ALMOST UNMATCHABLE.

While Lowell is undoubtedly the greatest literary critic that America has thus far produced, it is as a poet that he

has done his most permanent work. The best of his poems represent without question the highest and most sustained flights of the American Muse. Emerson alone among our poets is to be compared with him; and yet while Emerson occasionally touched the heights, it was but to fall ingloriously. The sustained excellence of "The Vision of Sir Launfal" and "The Commemoration Ode" is hard indeed to be equalled among the poets of the Victorian era.—Prof. Fred. Lewis Pattee. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S DEFECT BOTH AS POET AND PROSE WRITER.

As a prose writer Lowell is quite as eminent as he is as a poet. His essays, where nature is his theme, are brimful of delicious descriptions, and his critical papers on Chaucer, Shakespeare, Spenser, Dryden, Pope, and Rousseau, not to mention others, are masterpieces of their kind. His defect, both as poet and prose writer, comes from the too lavish use of his seemingly inexhaustible powers of wit, fancy, and imagination. He is apt to sacrifice unity of general effect by overloading his paragraphs with suggestive meaning. That wise reserve of expression to which Longfellow owes so much of his reputation, that subordination of minor thoughts to the leading thought of the poem or essay, are frequently disregarded by Lowell. His mind is too rich to submit even to artistic checks on its fertility.—Edwin P. Whipple. (*Cf.* above.)

LOWELL'S ADDRESS ON "DEMOCRACY."

There were those who believed, or affected to believe, that the flatteries of the aristocratic and literary society of London had turned the poet's head, and alienated him from sympathy with the mass of his countrymen. If it were possible to suppose that the author of "The Biglow Papers" and the essay on "Abraham Lincoln" had turned snob, a sufficient answer lay in the address on "Democracy," which he delivered on assuming the presidency of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, in October, 1884. Never did American democracy receive a better defence. Defences more sweeping it may often have had; it was not in Lowell's nature to indulge in uncritical laudation of all the traits and fruits of popular government in the United States. But with a wise and temperate, and therefore effective, championship, he set forth a high and reasonable faith in government by the people, a well-fortified confidence in their good sense and self-control. It was such a defence as should be made in behalf of a democracy no longer callow and vociferous, but adult, mellowed by time, and sobered by experience.—PROF. J. F. JAMESON, *in a paper entitled "Lowell and Public Affairs"* (Rev. of Rev.).

THE INFLUENCE OF LOWELL'S TEACHING ON PUBLIC MORALS.

There is a time in the life of every young man when "The Present Crisis" is, as it were, a voice from on high.

He sees the world torn by warring factions. Truth seems crushed to earth and wrong triumphant. Wickedness sits in high places, and the chosen of God are in captivity. Jim Fiske dwells in a marble palace on Fifth Avenue and William Lloyd Garrison lies in a dungeon cell. Then he reads:

"Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness, 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own." [1]

And he is willing to wait for the event.—PROF. RICHARD D. JONES, *in a paper entitled "Lowell and the Public Schools"* (Rev. of Rev.).

LOWELL THE ISAIAH AND EZEKIEL OF HIS TIME.

Lowell's poem "On the Capture of Fugitive Slaves near Washington" and his "Lines on the Present Crisis" approach as nearly the prophetic fire of Isaiah and Ezekiel as any writing in prose or verse of modern time. They have all the insight of the seer, and blaze with the indignant passion of outraged humanity.—WILLIAM T. STEAD, *in a paper entitled "Lowell's Message and How it Helped me"* (Rev. of Rev.).

[1] Eighth stanza of "The Present Crisis."

"LOWELL WILL LIVE BY VIRTUE OF HIS FACULTY AS SEER."

Lowell, however admirable as a man of letters, a diplomatist, a wit, and a diner-out, will live in the memory of the English-speaking race by virtue of his vision and faculty divine as the seer. He recognised that the serious moral element contributed of the puritans and their descendants was the saving salt of the States where English is spoken, and as long as that element exists it will regard Mr. Lowell as one of the most vigorous and faithful of its exponents.

"It may be glorious to write
Thoughts that shall glad the two or three
High souls, like those far stars that come in sight
Once in a century;

"But better far it is to speak
One simple word, which now and then
Shall waken their free nature in the weak
And friendless sons of men;

"To write some earnest verse or line,
Which, seeking not the praise of art,
Shall make a clearer faith and manhood shine
In the untutored heart.

"He who doth this, in verse or prose,
May be forgotten in his day,
But surely shall be crowned at last with those
Who live and speak for aye." [1]

—WILLIAM T. STEAD, *in a paper entitled "Lowell's Message and How it Helped me."* (*Cf.* above.)

[1] The last four stanzas of Lowell's poem "An Incident in a Railroad Car."

LOWELL'S LITERARY LIFE A CONTINUOUS ASCENSION.

We saw Lowell as a youth, a writer of rather frivolous verse; then a lover inditing sonnets; then a reformer with the earnestness and high purpose of a primitive Christian; then a satirist and a delineator of Yankee character, to serve a great cause; then a patriot, devoted to the unity and glory of country; and then a philosophic poet reasoning upon the dealings of the Almighty with men, and meditating upon duty and destiny—faith and the immortal life. His literary career was a steady upward movement.—Dr. Francis H. Underwood. (*Cf.* above.)

POET, CRITIC, THINKER, SCHOLAR, MAN, AND GENTLEMAN.

To say that we are more indebted to Lowell than to any of his famous peers is not to say that he was greater than they, but that his gifts were more numerous than theirs—which is true, since to those which were the inheritance of his genius he added others from provinces that he made tributary to it—and that he employed these gifts with a directness, a force, a knowledge, an adjustment of means to ends, which his contemporaries did not possess, and which is rare among men of letters. A poet, he was more than a poet; a critic, he was more than a critic; a thinker, he was more than a thinker; from beginning to end he was a man—a man in every fibre and every feeling, right-minded, clear-minded, strong-minded, honest, honourable, courageous, resolute. He was this, and more, for

to this there was superadded the something which makes the man the gentleman and the gentleman the man of the world. There was nothing provincial about him. No American writer was ever better and few were ever so well equipped for the profession to which he devoted himself with such sincerity and fidelity, such singleness of purpose and such unwavering determination. He was a scholar in the best sense of the word, possessed of a thorough knowledge of English literature and critically conversant with other literatures as well—the classics of Greece and Rome, and the classics of Spain and Italy, France and Germany. A scholar, not a pedant, he mastered his learning, and it profited him in the large horizons which it disclosed to his spiritual vision and the felicity and dignity which it imparted to his style. Gentleman and scholar in all that he wrote, there is that in his writing which declares a greater intellect than it reveals. He was more than his work.—RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.

SOME LITERARY QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

By HARRIET L. MASON, A.M.,
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QUERIES.

1. To what sad family affliction does Lowell's poem, "The Darkened Mind," refer?

2. What event was it which gave the seriousness and earnestness to Lowell's life and saved him, perhaps, from being something of a dilettante?

3. What poem of Longfellow's refers to Lowell's wife's death?

4. What important magazines did Lowell edit?

5. How did the English people look upon Lowell during his residence in England as American minister?

6. What famous poem of Lowell's was written in forty-eight hours, without food or sleep?

7. What poems of Lowell's, that will fix forever in literature the Yankee dialect, made it respectable to be on the side of freedom?

8. What was the poem that the sculptor William Wetmore Story came purposely from Rome to hear Lowell deliver?

9. What is the rank of this poem, and what personal losses sustained by the poet made its utterance deeply impressive?

10. How does Lowell speak of Lincoln?

11. Upon what subject, usually a favourite with poets, does Lowell touch upon perhaps only once in his poems?

12. What has been said of Lowell's literary style in his communications to the government during his long years of political service?

13. What poem, written to fill a vacant page in "The Biglow Papers," is a Yankee idyl without a counterpart?

14. What charming evidence of Lowell's popularity and of his delightful grace in letter-writing is on record?

15. With respect to what poem, a memorial of his child, did Lowell say to the printers: "Print that as if you loved it. Let not a comma be blundered"?

16. What exquisite tribute to the poet's love for his wife is to be found in Lowell's poem, "The Dead House"?

17. How has England honoured Lowell's memory?

18. What poem of Lowell's, exquisite and haunting, hints at the doctrine of preëxistence?

19. What has been said of Lowell to illustrate the fact that, though a man of culture, of books, he was "near to nature's heart"?

20. What poem of Lowell's, first published anonymously, was, on account of its fire, attributed to Whittier?

ANSWERS.

1. To the fact that the poet's mother, from whom he inherited his poetic and imaginative faculties, lost her mental power.

2. His marriage to Maria White, who turned his life into the strong movement of the time—abolition.

3. "The Two Angels." The night of Mrs. Lowell's death a child was born to Longfellow.

4. He was the first editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and then, with Charles Eliot Norton, for ten years the editor of the *North American Review*.

5. He won the respect and admiration of everybody. He was popular in social and public life and his patriotism was note-

worthy. Gladstone's adoption of his home-rule policy was hastened by Lowell's influence over him when in England.

6. "The Vision of Sir Launfal," his best-known poem—famous for its contrasted pictures of summer and winter.

7. "The Biglow Papers." "Hosea Biglow" was Lowell's pseudonym. These poems stamped Lowell once for all as an original poet.

8. "The Harvard Commemoration Ode," delivered near the college grounds after an address by General Meade, the hero of Gettysburg.

9. It is the classic poem of the Civil War, most noble and strong—the greatest national poem. Lowell had lost three favourite nephews in the war, and Colonel Shaw, leader of the first coloured regiment ever formed, whose monument has just been erected in Boston, was another relative.

10. See "The Harvard Commemoration Ode":

> "Nature, they say, doth dote,
> And cannot make a man
> Save on some worn-out plan,
> Repeating us by rote:
> For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
> And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
> Of the unexhausted West,
> With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
> Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true."

11. "Pictures of Appledore" contains almost Lowell's only mention of the sea.

12. Not one of his communications was devoid of literary merit. "If there were many such dispatches written 'blue books' would be as popular as three-volume novels."

13. "The Courtin'":

> "Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
> An' peeked in thru' the winder."

14. When Lowell was in London Lord Granville invited him to dine, and apologised in his note for sending such short notice "to the most engaged man in London." Lowell replied: "'The most engaged man' is very glad to dine with the most engaging."

15. "The First Snow-Fall."

16. "'Twas just a womanly presence,
An influence unexprest;
But a rose she had worn, on my grave sod,
Were more than long life with the rest!"

17. There was a memorial service at Westminster Abbey, and in 1893 a memorial window was put in the Chapter House of the Abbey.

18. "In the Twilight":

"Sometimes a breath floats by me,
An odour from Dreamland sent,
That makes the ghost seem nigh me
Of a splendour that came and went;
Of a life lived somewhere, I know not
In what diviner sphere,
Of memories that stay not and go not,
Like music heard once by an ear
That cannot forget or reclaim it."

19. "He never lost the thrill of being out of doors."

20. "The Present Crisis":

"Launch our Mayflower and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key."

READERS' AND STUDENTS' NOTES.

1. Critics are not wholly agreed as to Lowell's place in literature, either as a poet or as a critic, though in each respect his rank is universally admitted to be high. Both his poetic work and his prose work lack an exactness and accuracy of finish, and oftentimes a fit proportion and artistic unity, which keep them from being of the very highest rank. Nevertheless, much of Lowell's work, both in prose and verse, is among the most notable yet written by an American, and a knowledge of the writings of no author is more indispensable to the student, or to the reader who wishes to feel assured that he is acquainted with American literature.

2. As a poet, Lowell occupied several wholly different sorts of ground, not often cultivated by one and the same person. He was a humourist, a satirist, a poet of nature, a poet of reflection, a poet of patriotism, and a poet of ethical and religious inspiration. The reader can scarcely believe that the same person wrote "The Courtin'" and the "Commemoration Ode"; "The Changeling" and "What Mr. Robinson Thinks."

3. A great writer should always be studied first with reference to the work he produced that made most impression upon his fellow-countrymen at the time he produced it. This is the course we recommended in the case of Whittier. We would recommend it just as strongly in the case of Lowell. The work of Lowell's that produced most contemporaneous effect upon his fellow-countrymen was undoubtedly "The Biglow Papers." Few

young people now-a-days, we suppose, will care to take the pains to read all of these papers, but every young American should at least be familiar with the general drift of the papers, and should read carefully some parts of them. The parts that we would recommend for such partial reading would be as follows:

(1) No. I. in the First Series—"Thrash away, you'll *hev* to rattle."

(2) No. III. in the First Series—"What Mr. Robinson Thinks" (perhaps the one production of Lowell's that is most widely known).

(3) No. II. in the Second Series—"Mason and Slidell—A Yankee Idyl," concluding with "Jonathan to John."

(4) No. VI. in the Second Series—"Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line."

"The Biglow Papers" are, without question, Lowell's most original and most permanent contribution to American literature.—PROFESSOR PATTEE.

The stinging stanzas of "Jonathan to John" are unsurpassed in all English satire.—PROF. BRANDER MATTHEWS.

4. Poets win fame by the general merit of their work; but enduring fame can be won only by work of the perfect quality of gems. Lowell has produced few gems, although he has produced some. The one poem of Lowell's as to which critics and the public both agree that it is a gem of the first rank is "The Courtin'." In reading it we must remember, however, that it was an improvisation, written, as the author has told us, in response to "a word from the printer that there was a blank page which must be filled."

One of the most beautifully natural love-episodes in all English poetry.—PROF. BRANDER MATTHEWS.

Our best nature idyl.—E. C. STEDMAN.

5. Lowell's first reputation was gained by qualities by which reputation is always quickly gained—humour and satire. Reputations so gained are perilous, but in Lowell's case he has held his reputation not less by the sterling character of his humour

and satire than by his sterling merits in other directions. It was his "Fable for Critics," produced in his twenty-ninth year, that first won for Lowell a fame that was more than local, though much of his best poetry was produced earlier than it; and the "Fable for Critics," though it was written more than fifty years ago, still retains those qualities of humour and satire which first made it famous. It is very uneven in its merits, however, and it may be read in parts, with no loss of any sort. But its best parts are as good things of the sort as have ever been written. Among these are the lines on (1) Irving, (2) Cooper, (3) Poe, (4) Bryant, (5) Hawthorne, (6) Emerson, and Emerson and Carlyle; (7) Margaret Fuller ("Miranda"), (8) Whittier, (9) Holmes, (10) Lowell himself. We must remember in reading this poem, that when it was first written the author had no notion of publishing it. "This *jeu d'esprit*," he has told us, "was 'extemporised,' I may fairly say, so rapidly was it written, purely for my own amusement, and with no thought of publication."

6. Apart from "The Courtin'," Lowell's most popular poems are almost all poems of the heart and affections. Many of them were early poems. Of these "popular favourites," perhaps the most popular are (1) "The Heritage," (2) "She Came and Went," (3) "The Changeling," (4) "The First Snow-Fall," (5) "Auf Wiedersehen," (6) "Palinode," (7) "After the Burial," (8) "The Dead House." To these may be added as almost equally popular, (9) "My Love," (10) "Above and Below," (11) "The Darkened Mind," (12) "An Ember Picture," (13) "Das Ewig-Weibliche."

7. Lowell was a true poet, and, what is rarer, a true poet of nature. One cannot help regretting, in reading his poetry, that he had not given himself up to poetry wholly—at least had given to poetry the time and mental effort which he gave to literary criticism. Had he lived the life of contemplation and poetic brooding which Tennyson lived, or even Longfellow, no poet of his generation would have surpassed him. Lowell's nature poems, though some of them lack artistic finish, are among the

finest in the language. Of these, four are to be particularly mentioned. These are (1) "An Indian Summer Reverie," (2) "To the Dandelion," (3) "Beaver Brook," (4) "Pictures from Appledore." "To the Dandelion" is "a gem of purest ray serene." Scarcely less notable than these four are several of the following: (5) "The Sirens," (6) "The Moon," (7) "Midnight," (8) "To a Pine Tree," (9) "The Oak," (10) "The Birch Tree," (11) "Under the Willows" (one of Lowell's greater poems), (12) "Al Fresco."

8. Next to Lowell's poems of humour and satire, the poems of his that made most contemporaneous impression upon his fellow-countrymen were his patriotic poems and poems of freedom. Of these the first to be mentioned is that far-famed trumpet cry of 1844, "The Present Crisis." Next perhaps is that remarkable poem, written October, 1861, "in two days," "The Washers of the Shroud." But Lowell's high-water mark as a poet, not only as a poet of freedom and patriotism, but as a poet of great and noble passion of every sort, was reached in his "Commemoration Ode," an ode recited at Harvard Commemoration Service, July 21, 1865. Three other national poems, (1) "Ode Read at the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Fight at Concord Bridge," (2) "Under the Old Elm"—the poem read at Cambridge on the one hundredth anniversary of Washington's taking command of the American army, and (3) "An Ode for the Fourth of July, 1876," completed the list of Lowell's great patriotic poetic productions, and proved him to be, in greatness of spirit, in high thought, and noble utterance, *facile princeps*, the national poet of his time.

9. But Lowell was also a poet of culture, and some of his most notable, most characteristic poems remain yet to be mentioned. Of these, the beautiful "Vision of Sir Launfal," written in 1848, is undoubtedly the chief. "The Vision of Sir Launfal" is perhaps the most perfectly artistic, the most highly imaginative, of all Lowell's efforts. Then there is that noble production, "The Cathedral," written in 1870, characterised, however, by a compe-

tent critic, truthfully enough, as a poem "whose parts are greater than the whole." Then there are several poems of legend, history, or incident, of fine merit; namely, (1) "A Legend of Brittany," (2) "The Shepherd of King Admetus," (3) "Rhœcus," (4) "An Incident in a Railroad Car," (5) "A Glance Behind the Curtain," (6) "Columbus," (7) "An Incident of the Fire at Hamburg," (8) "Ambrose," and (9) the ballad "The Singing Leaves." "Ambrose" is noteworthy from the fact that, though only a poetic legend, it embodies one of those deep spiritual truths which Lowell for many years found it his mission to utter.

10. Other poems of religious feeling or reflection, some of which rank with the poet's masterpieces, are: (1) "Extreme Unction," (2) "Above and Below," (3) "Longing," (4) "A Parable" ("Said Christ our Lord, 'I will go and see'"), (5) "The Miner," and (6) "St. Michael the Weigher." Also there is to be mentioned that fine poem of mingled patriotic and religious fervour, (7) "An Interview with Miles Standish."

11. Lowell's critical work appeals to scholars or readers with wide experience and considerable culture rather than to the general public. The two books of "critical essays," by which Lowell is best known as a critic, are "Among my Books"—First and Second Series. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $2.00 each series.) The student who wishes to see what Lowell is when at his best as a critic, should read in these books of essays (1) "Dryden," (2) "Shakespeare Once More," (3) "Lessing and Rousseau," (4) "Dante," (5) "Spenser," (6) "Wordsworth," and (7) "Keats."

12. Lowell's most popular prose book is "My Study Windows." This is a collection of essays, in the main not critical, reprinted chiefly from his contributions to the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *North American Review*. Two nature studies in this book, (1) "My Garden Acquaintance," and (2) "A Good Word for Winter," are classics, and should be known to every one. In the same book is the noteworthy paper on Emerson, entitled

"Emerson the Lecturer." (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $2.00.)

13. Lowell's most distinguished characteristic, the characteristic that pervaded almost everything he wrote, certainly everything that he publicly uttered, was his Americanism. His "Democracy," an address that he delivered in Birmingham, while minister to England, should be looked upon as a manual for all young Americans. It will be found as the leading paper in "Democracy and Other Addresses," a volume of addresses collected by Mr. Lowell in 1886. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.25. The same work constitutes No. 123 of the same publishers' "Riverside Literature Series," published at 15 cents.)

14. No life of Lowell like Samuel Longfellow's "Life of Longfellow," or Morse's "Life of Holmes," has appeared. But "The Letters of James Russell Lowell," edited by Lowell's lifelong friend, Prof. Charles Eliot Norton, supply almost all the material needed for a study of the intimate life of their author. The editor says: "Read together, Lowell's poems and his letters show him with rare completeness as he really was." The work is enriched by a letter to the editor written by the English author and critic, Leslie Stephen. This letter is, in effect, a sketch of Lowell —a "sketch," the editor says, "which for its vital resemblance no other hand could have drawn." (New York: Harper & Brothers. 2 vols., $8.00.)

15. The biographical sketch by Dr. Francis H. Underwood, entitled "The Poet and the Man: Recollections and Appreciations of James Russell Lowell," is an excellent short account of Lowell and his writings, both reminiscent and critical. The knowledge of Lowell supplied in this book is the outcome of years of personal intercourse and intimacy, and the book therefore is unusually interesting. (Boston: Lee & Shepard.) The author has announced in the same series ("A Northern Constellation"—Boston: Lee & Shepard) similar brief biographies of Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, and Holmes. Dr. Underwood has also written another biographical account of Lowell, entitled

"James Russell Lowell: A Biographical Sketch" (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.50), and has written similar biographical sketches of Whittier and Longfellow. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Each $1.50.)

16. Another life of Lowell is that by E. E. Brown. (Boston: D. Lothrop Company.)

17. The most recent biographical account of Lowell is that made up of the fascinating series of papers recently published in the *Outlook*, entitled "James Russell Lowell and his Friends," written by Lowell's college-mate and lifelong friend, Dr. Edward Everett Hale. One very noteworthy feature of the book is its many fine illustrations—among them being many portraits of Lowell, a portrait of Mrs. (Maria White) Lowell, and characteristic portraits of Longfellow, Holmes, Felton, Agassiz, Norton, etc. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $3.00.)

18. Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, are the publishers of the standard editions of Lowell's works, both prose and poetical, and their editions are numerous and, of course, excellent. Of the "Poems," we would specially recommend, both for typography and editing, the "Cambridge Edition" ($2.00). This edition is further enriched by an appreciative biographical sketch by Horace E. Scudder.

19. A very excellent but keen and discriminating critical estimate of Lowell is to be found in Professor Richardson's "American Literature," vol. ii. Professor Richardson lays severe stress upon Lowell's proneness to verbosity. "Words, words, words," he cries; and there is some reason for this animadversion. But the criticism, taken as a whole, gives a first-rate, all-round view of Lowell. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 2 vols. in one, $3.50.)

20. Once more we would commend to our students two excellent handbooks of American literature, and we do so just now more particularly because of their excellent chapters on Lowell. These works are:

(1) "A History of American Literature: With a View to the

Fundamental Principles Underlying its Development," by Prof. Fred. Lewis Pattee. (Boston: Silver, Burdett & Co.)

(2) "An Introduction to the Study of American Literature," by Brander Matthews, LL.D. (New York: American Book Co.)

21. Few people now-a-days—that is, few people outside the ranks of professional students—have time or opportunity to read complete works. There is, therefore, always a very great need of well-edited "selections." Such selections in the case of Lowell are to be found in Nos. 5 and 31 of the "Modern Classics" series, the one (No. 5) containing a number of Lowell's chief poems, the other (No. 31) containing two of his most popular prose pieces, the nature study, "My Garden Acquaintance," and the humorous out-door sketch, "A Moosehead Journal." (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 75 cents each number.) A collection of Lowell's Odes, Lyrics, and Sonnets will be found in No. 7 of Houghton, Mifflin & Co.'s "White and Gold" series ($1.00).

22. For reminiscent and critical accounts of Lowell, other than those referred to in the above notes, the student is directed as follows:

(1) To Charles F. Richardson's "Cambridge on the Charles," in *Harper's Magazine*, January, 1876.

(2) To E. C. Stedman's "James Russell Lowell," in the *Century Magazine*, May, 1882.

(3) To W. T. Stead's, Prof. C. T. Winchester's, Raymond Blathwayt's, and others' "character sketches," etc., of Lowell, in *The Review of Reviews*, October, 1891.

(4) To Prof. G. E. Woodberry's "James Russell Lowell," in the *Century Magazine*, November, 1891.

(5) To Prof. G. E. Woodberry's "James Russell Lowell," in J. L. and J. B. Gilder's "Authors at Home." (New York: Cassell & Co.)

(6) To Hattie Tyng Griswold's "James Russell Lowell," in her "Home Life of Great Authors." (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. $1.50.)

(7) To E. C. Stedman's "Poets of America." (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $2.25.)

(8) To E. P. Whipple's "Outlooks on Society, Literature, and Politics"—"Lowell as a Prose Writer." (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.25).

(9) To E. P. Whipple's "American Literature"—where will be found a very short but very discerning notice. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. $1.50.)

(10) To Rev. H. R. Haweis' "American Humourists" (which also contains papers on Irving and Holmes). (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co. 75 cents.)

23. The teacher of literature (and the student as well) will find the following little manuals very helpful:

(1) William C. Gannett's "Studies in Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, and Lowell"—containing outlines and copies for study and questions and references. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Paper, 15 cents.)

(2) Louise Manning Hodgkins' "Guide to the Study of Nineteenth Century Authors." (Boston: D. C. Heath & Co.) This last-named work, prepared by the Professor of English Literature in Wellesley College, although it is made up wholly of references and detached data, could be the product only of great research and a wide acquaintance with literature.

24. In the study of literature, no works are more useful than meritorious collections of biographies. For the study of American literature such a work is the book entitled "The Builders of American Literature," by Francis H. Underwood, LL.D. (Boston: Lee & Shepard. $1.50.) It consists, in the words of the title-page, of a "series of biographical sketches of American authors born previous to 1826." Of these sketches there are no fewer than one hundred and eleven. Mingled with the biography is a good deal of critical comment and bibliographical information, the whole making a handbook that the young student of American literature will find it very difficult to do without.

25. For young people the series of biographies comprised in Sarah K. Bolton's "Famous American Authors" can be highly commended. (New York: T. Y. Crowell & Co. $1.50.)

ILLUSTRATIVE READINGS.

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READINGS FROM LONGFELLOW.

I. RAIN IN SUMMER.

How beautiful is the rain!
After the dust and heat,
In the broad, fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain!

How it clatters along the roofs,
Like the tramp of hoofs!
How it gushes and struggles out
From the throat of the overflowing spout!
Across the window-pane
It pours and it pours;
And swift and wide,
With a muddy tide,
Like a river down the gutter roars,
The rain, the welcome rain!

The sick man from his chamber looks
At the twisted brooks;
He can feel the cool
Breath of each little pool;

The fevered brain
Grows calm again,
And he breathes a blessing on the rain.

From the neighbouring school
Come the boys,
With more than their wonted noise
And commotion;
And down the wet streets
Sail their mimic fleets,
Till the treacherous pool
Ingulfs them in its whirling
And turbulent ocean.

In the country, on every side,
Where, far and wide,
Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide,
Stretches the plain,
To the dry grass, and the dryer grain,
How welcome is the rain!
In the furrowed land
The toilsome and patient oxen stand;
Lifting the yoke-encumbered head,
With their dilated nostrils spread,
They silently inhale
The clover-scented gale,
And the vapours that arise
From the well-watered and smoking soil.
For this rest in the furrow after toil,
Their large and lustrous eyes
Seem to thank the Lord,
More than man's spoken word.

Near at hand,
From under the sheltering trees,
The farmer sees

His pastures, and his fields of grain,
As they bend their tops
To the numberless beating drops
Of the incessant rain.
He counts it as no sin,
That he sees therein
Only his own thrift and gain.

These, and far more than these,
The Poet sees!
He can behold
Aquarius old,
Walking the fenceless fields of the air,
And from each ample fold
Of the clouds about him rolled,
Scattering everywhere
The showery rain,
As the farmer scatters his grain.
He can behold
Things manifold,
That have not yet been wholly told,
Have not been wholly sung or said.
For his thought, that never stops,
Follows the water-drops
Down to the graves of the dead,
Down through the chasms and gulfs profound,
To the dreary fountain-head
Of lakes and rivers, under ground;
And sees them, when the rain is done,
On the bridge of colours seven,
Climbing up once more to heaven,
Opposite the setting sun.

Thus the Seer,
With vision clear,

Sees forms appear and disappear
In the perpetual round of strange
Mysterious change,
From birth to death, from death to birth,
From earth to heaven, from heaven to earth;
Till glimpses more sublime
Of things, unseen before,
Unto his wondering eyes reveal
The Universe, as an immeasurable wheel,
Turning forevermore
In the rapid and rushing river of Time.

II. THE DAY IS DONE.

THE day is done, and the darkness
  Falls from the wings of night,
As a feather is wafted downward
  From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
  Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
  That my soul cannot resist—

A feeling of sadness and longing,
  That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
  As the mist resembles rain.

Come read to me some poem,
  Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling
  And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
  Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
  Through the corridors of time;—

For, like strains of martial music,
  Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavour,
  And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
  Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer
  Or tears from the eyelids start;—

Who through long days of labour,
  And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in soul the music
  Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
  The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
  That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
  The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
  The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
  And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
  And as silently steal away.

III. THE SKELETON IN ARMOUR.

Speak! speak! thou fearful guest!
Who, with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armour drest,
  Comest to daunt me!
Wrapt not in eastern balms,
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
  Why dost thou haunt me?

Then from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the northern skies
  Gleam in December;
And like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
  From the heart's chamber:

"I was a Viking old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told!
  No Saga taught thee!
Take heed that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse!
  For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern land,
By the wide Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
  Tamed the ger-falcon;
And, with my skates fast bound,

Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail bout
Wore the long winter out;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing.
As we the Bersek's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning, yet tender;

And, as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendour.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frighted.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chanting his glory.
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

"While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed
And, as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly.

"She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
I was discarded!

Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight;
Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me—
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen!—
When, on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast;
Bent like a reed each mast;
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as, to catch the gale,
Round veered the flapping sail,
Death was the helmsman's hail—
Death without quarter!
Mid-ships, with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water!

"As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey laden,

So toward the open main
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane
Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to leeward;
There, for my lady's bower,
Built I the lofty tower
Which, to this very hour,
Stands looking seaward.

"There lived we many years;
Time dried the maiden's tears;
She had forgot her fears,
She was a mother.
Death closed her mild blue eyes;
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another!

"Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen!
Hateful to me were men—
The sunlight hateful!
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
O, death was grateful!

"Thus, seamed with many scars,
Bursting its prison bars,
Up to its native stars
My soul ascended!

There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal! to the Northland! *Skoal!*"
Thus the tale ended.

IV. THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

It was the schooner *Hesperus*,
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now west, now south.

Then up and spake an old sailor,
Had sailed the Spanish Main:
"I pray thee put into yonder port,
For I fear the hurricane.

"Last night the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see!"
The skipper he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the north-east;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm and smote amain
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused like a frighted steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! come hither! my little daughter,
And do not tremble so;
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat,
Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring,
O say, what may it be?"
"'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"
And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,
O say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light,
O say, what may it be?"
But the father answered never a word,—
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That savèd she might be;
And she thought of Christ who stilled the waves
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks they gored her sides
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass she stove and sank.
Ho! ho! the breakers roared.

At daybreak on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the *Hesperus*,
In the midnight and the snow;
Heaven save us all from a death like this
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

V. THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

Somewhat back from the village street,
Stands the old-fashioned country seat.
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar trees their shadows throw;
And from its station in the hall
An ancient time-piece says to all,
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Half way up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands,
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who under his cloak
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass,
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

By day its voice is low and light,
But in the silent dead of night,
Distinct as a passing footstep's fall
It echoes along the vacant hall,

Along the ceiling, along the floor,
And seems to say at each chamber door,
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted hospitality;
His great fires by the chimney roared,
The stranger feasted at his board;
But like the skeleton at the feast,
The warning time-piece never ceased,
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed.
O precious hours, O golden prime,
And affluence of love and time;
E'en as a miser counts his gold,
Those hours the ancient time-piece told,
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

From the chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding-night;
There in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the clock on the stair,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

All are scattered now and fled:
Some are married, some are dead;

And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
"Ah, when shall they all meet again,
As in the days long since gone by?"
The ancient time-piece makes reply,
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Never here, forever there!
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death and time shall disappear,
Forever there, but never here!
The horologe of eternity
Sayeth this incessantly,
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

VI. THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet;
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith, with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
  Yet I know, by their merry eyes,
They are plotting and planning together
  To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
  A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
  They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret,
  O'er the arms and back of my chair:
If I try to escape, they surround me·
  They seem to be everywhere!

They almost devour me with kisses;
  Their arms about me entwine;
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen,
  In his Mouse Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
  Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
  Is not a match for you all?

I have you in my fortress,
  And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeons
  In the round-tower of my heart.

And there I will keep you forever,
  Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
  And moulder in dust away.

VII. THE FAMINE.

FROM "HIAWATHA."

O THE long and dreary Winter!
O the cold and cruel Winter!
Ever thicker, thicker, thicker,
Froze the ice on lake and river;
Ever deeper, deeper, deeper.
Fell the snow o'er all the landscape,
Fell the covering snow, and drifted
Through the forest, round the village.
Hardly from his buried wigwam
Could the hunter force a passage;
With his mittens and his snow-shoes
Vainly walked he through the forest,
Sought for bird or beast and found none,
Saw no track of deer or rabbit,
In the snow beheld no footprints,
In the ghastly, gleaming forest
Fell and could not rise from weakness,
Perished there from cold and hunger.

O the famine and the fever!
O the wasting of the famine!
O the blasting of the fever!
O the wailing of the children!
O the anguish of the women!

All the earth was sick and famished;
Hungry was the air around them,
Hungry was the sky above them,
And the hungry stars in heaven
Like the eyes of wolves glared at them!

Into Hiawatha's wigwam
Came two other guests, as silent
As the ghosts were, and as gloomy,
Waited not to be invited,
Did not parley at the doorway,
Sat there without word of welcome
In the seat of Laughing Water;
Looked with haggard eyes and hollow
At the face of Laughing Water.
And the foremost said, "Behold me!
I am Famine, Bukadawin!"
And the other said, "Behold me!
I am Fever, Ahkosewin!"

And the lovely Minnehaha
Shuddered as they looked upon her,
Shuddered at the words they uttered.
Lay down on her bed in silence,
Hid her face, but made no answer;
Lay there trembling, freezing, burning
At the looks they cast upon her;
At the fearful words they uttered.

Forth into the empty forest
Rushed the maddened Hiawatha;
In his heart was deadly sorrow,
In his face a stony firmness;
On his brow the sweat of anguish
Started, but it froze, and fell not.

Wrapped in furs and armed for hunting,
With his mighty bow of ash-tree,
With his quiver full of arrows,
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,

Into the vast and vacant forest
On his snow-shoes strode he forward.

"Gitche Manito, the Mighty!"
Cried he with his face uplifted
In that bitter hour of anguish,
"Give your children food, O father!
Give us food, or we must perish;
Give me food for Minnehaha,
For my dying Minnehaha!"

Through the far-resounding forest,
Through the forest vast and vacant,
Rang that cry of desolation;
But there came no other answer
Than the echo of his crying,
Than the echo of the woodlands,
"Minnehaha! Minnehaha!"

All day long roved Hiawatha
In that melancholy forest,
Through the shadow of whose thickets,
In the pleasant days of summer,
Of that ne'er forgotten summer,
He had brought his young bride homeward
From the land of the Dacotahs;
When the birds sang in the thickets,
And the air was full of fragrance,
And the lovely Laughing Water
Said with voice that did not tremble,
"I will follow you, my husband!"

In the wigwam with Nokomis,
With those gloomy guests that watched her
With the Famine and the Fever,

She was lying, the Beloved,
She, the dying Minnehaha.

"Hark!" she said; "I hear a rushing,
Hear a roaring and a rushing,
Hear the Falls of Minnehaha
Calling to me from a distance!"
"No, my child," said old Nokomis,
'Tis the night-wind in the pine trees!"
"Look!" she said; "I see my father
Standing lonely at his doorway,
Beckoning to me from his wigwam
In the land of the Dacotahs!"
"No, my child!" said old Nokomis,
"'Tis the smoke, that waves and beckons!"
"Ah!" she said, "the eyes of Pauguk
Glare upon me in the darkness;
I can feel his icy fingers
Clasping mine amid the darkness!
"Hiawatha! Hiawatha!"

And the desolate Hiawatha,
Far away amid the forest,
Miles away among the mountains,
Heard the voice of Minnehaha
Calling to him in the darkness,
"Hiawatha! Hiawatha!"

Over snow-fields waste and pathless,
Under snow-encumbered branches,
Homeward hurried Hiawatha,
Empty-handed, heavy-hearted,
Heard Nokomis moaning, wailing;
"Wahonowin! Wahonowin!
Would that I had perished for you!

Would that I were dead, as you are!
Wahonowin! Wahonowin!"

And he rushed into the wigwam,
Saw the old Nokomis slowly
Rocking to and fro and moaning,
Saw his lovely Minnehaha
Lying dead and cold before him,
And his bursting heart within him
Uttered such a cry of anguish,
That the forest moaned and slumbered,
That the very stars in heaven
Shook and trembled with his anguish.

Then he sat down, still and speechless,
On the bed of Minnehaha,
At the feet of Laughing Water,
At those willing feet, that never
More would lightly run to meet him;
Never more would lightly follow.

With both hands his face he covered.
Seven long days and nights he sat there,
As if in a swoon he sat there,
Speechless, motionless, unconscious
Of the daylight or the darkness.

Then they buried Minnehaha;
In the snow a grave they made her,
In the forest, deep and darksome,
Underneath the moaning hemlocks;
Clothed her in her richest garments,
Wrapped her in her robes of ermine,—
Covered her with snow, like ermine;
Thus they buried Minnehaha.

And at night a fire was lighted,
On her grave four times was kindled,
For her soul upon its journey
To the Island of the Blessèd.
From his doorway Hiawatha
Saw it burning in the forest,
Lighting up the gloomy hemlocks;
From his sleepless bed uprising,
From the bed of Minnehaha,
Stood and watched it at the doorway,
That it might not be extinguished,
Might not leave her in the darkness.

"Farewell," said he, "Minnehaha!
Farewell, O my Laughing Water!
All my heart is buried with you,
All my thoughts go onward with you;
Come not back again to labour,
Come not back again to suffer,
Where the famine and the fever
Wear the heart and waste the body.
Soon my task will be completed,
Soon your footsteps I shall follow
To the Island of the Blessèd,
To the Kingdom of Ponemah,
To the Land of the Hereafter."

READINGS FROM WHITTIER.

I. MAUD MULLER.

Maud Muller, on a summer's day,
Raked the meadows sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast—

A wish, that she had hardly dared to own,
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And ask a draught from the spring that flowed
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,
And filled for him her small tin cup,

And blushed as she gave it, looking down
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

Then said the Judge, "A sweeter draught
From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather,

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,
And her graceful ankles, bare and brown,

And listened, while a pleased surprise
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked, and sighed: "Ah me!
"That I the Judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,
And praise and toast me at his wine.

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat;
My brother should sail a painted boat;

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
And the boy should have a new toy each day,

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,
And all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet;

"And her modest and graceful air
Shows her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,
Like her, a harvester of hay;

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,
And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters, proud and cold,
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well,
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go:

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside rill instead,

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms,
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed with a secret pain,
"Ah, that I was free again!

"Free as when I rode that day
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door;

But care and sorrow and childbirth pain
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring-brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein,

And, gazing down with tender grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinet turned,
The tallow candle an astral burned.

And for him who sat by the chimney log
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty, and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been."

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,
For rich refiner and household drudge!

God pity them both! and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away.

II. BARBARA FRIETCHIE.

Up from the meadows, rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered fires of Frederick stand,
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep.

Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall,
When Lee marched over the mountain wall,—

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags, with their silver stars,
Forty flags, with crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one!

Up rose Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten,—

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down.

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat, left and right,
He glanced: the old flag met his sight.

"Halt!"—the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
"Fire!"—out blazed the rifle blast.

It shivered the window, pane, and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell from the broken staff,
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

"Shoot, if you must, this gray old head;
But spare your country's flag!" she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came.

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word.

"Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.

All day long, through Frederick street,
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tossed
Over the heads of the rebel host;

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave
Flag of Freedom and Union wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law!

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below at Frederick town.

III. SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE.

Of all the rides, since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rhyme—
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,
Or one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass,
Witch astride of a human hack,
Islam's prophet on Al-Borak—
The strangest ride that ever was sped
  Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!
  Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
  Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
    By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part,
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.

Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle, glib of tongue,
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,
Over and over the Mænads sang:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him!—he sailed away
From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay—
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own towns-people on her deck!
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him;
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie for evermore.
Mother and sister, wife and maid,

Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea—
Looked for the coming that might not be!
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?—
  Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
  Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
    By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,
Up flew windows, doors swung wide,
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray,
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head and fist and hat and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:
  "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
  Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
    By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim,
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Of voices shouting far and near:
  "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
  Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
    By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbours!" at last he cried—
"What to me is this noisy ride?

What is the shame that clothes the skin
To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me—I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said, "*God has touched him!—why should we?*"
Said an old wife mourning her only son,
"*Cut the rogue's tether, and let him run!*"
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

IV. THE BAREFOOT BOY.

Blessings on thee, little man—
Barefoot Boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace.
From my heart I give thee joy—
I was once a Barefoot Boy!

Prince thou art—the grown up man
Only is Republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy—
In the reach of ear and eye
Outward sunshine, inward joy;—
Blessings on thee, Barefoot Boy!

Oh, for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned in schools;
Of the wild-bee's morning chase,
Of the wild-flower's time and place;
Flight of fowl, and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow;
Where the ground-nut trails his vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay;
Of the architectural plans
Of gray-hornet artisans!—
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,

Part and parcel of her joy.
Blessings on thee, Barefoot Boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptism of the dew;
Every evening, from thy feet,
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod—
Like a colt's, for work be shod.
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, Barefoot Boy!

V. NEW ENGLAND.

Land of the forest and the rock,
Of the dark-blue lake, and mighty river,
Of mountains reared aloft to mock
The storm's career, the lightning's shock,—
My own green land forever!

Land of the beautiful and brave,
The freeman's home, the martyr's grave;
The nursery of giant men,
Whose deeds have linked with every glen,

And every hill, and every stream,
The romance of some warrior-dream:
O, never may a son of thine,
Where'er his wandering steps incline,
Forget the sky which bent above
His childhood like a dream of love,
The stream beneath the green hill flowing,
The broad-armed trees above it growing,
The clear breeze through the foliage blowing;
Or hear, unmoved, the taunt of scorn
Breathed o'er the brave New England born;

Or mark the stranger's jaguar-hand
  Disturb the ashes of thy dead,—
The buried glory of a land
  Whose soil with noble blood is red,—
Nor feel resentment, like a brand
  Unsheathing from his fiery heart!

VI. THE RIVER PATH.

No bird-song floated down the hill,
The tangled bank below was still;

No rustle from the birchen stem,
No ripple from the water's hem.

The dusk of twilight round us grew;
We felt the falling of the dew;

For, from us, ere the day was done,
The wooded hills shut out the sun.

But on the river's farther side,
We saw the hill-tops glorified,—

A tender glow, exceeding fair,
A dream of day without its glare.

With us the damp, the chill, the gloom;
With them the sunset's rosy bloom;

While dark, through willowy vistas seen,
The river rolled in shade between.

From out the darkness where we trod,
We gazed upon those hills of God,

Whose light seemed not of moon, or sun.
We spake not, but our thought was one.

We paused, as if from that bright shore
Beckoned our dear ones gone before;

And stilled our beating hearts to hear
The voices lost to mortal ear!

Sudden our pathway turned from night,
The hills swung open to the light;

Through their green gates the sunshine showed,
A long, slant splendor downward flowed.

Down glade and glen and bank it rolled,
It bridged the shaded stream with gold;

And, borne on piers of mist, allied
The shadowy with the sunlit side!

"So," prayed we, "when our feet draw near
The river, dark with mortal fear,

"And the night cometh chill with dew,
O Father! let thy light break through!

"So let the hills of doubt divide,
So bridge with faith the sunless tide!

"So let the eyes that fail on earth
On thy eternal hills look forth!

"And in thy beckoning angels know
The dear ones whom we loved below!"

VII. A PRESENT HELP.

We may not climb the heavenly steeps
To bring the Saviour down;
In vain we search the lowest deeps,
For Him no depth can drown.

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He;
And faith has yet its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

Through Him the first fond prayers are said
Our lips of childhood frame,
The last low whispers of our dead
Are burdened with His name.

O Lord and Master of us all!
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine.

READINGS FROM LOWELL.

I. THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL.*

PRELUDE TO PART FIRST.

Over his keys the musing organist,
  Beginning doubtfully and far away,
First lets his fingers wander as they list,
  And builds a bridge from Dreamland for his lay:
Then, as the touch of his loved instrument
  Gives hope and fervour, nearer draws his theme,
First guessed by faint auroral flushes sent
  Along the wavering vista of his dream.

Not only around our infancy
Doth heaven with all its splendours lie;
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb and know it not.

* The following note was prefixed by Mr. Lowell to the first edition of *The Vision of Sir Launfal* (Cambridge, 1848): "According to the mythology of the Romancers, the San Greal was the cup out of which Jesus partook of the last supper with His disciples. It was brought into England by Joseph of Arimathea, and remained there, an object of pilgrimage and adoration for many years, in the keeping of his lineal descendants. It was incumbent upon those who had charge of it to be chaste in thought, word, and deed; but one of the keepers having broken this condition, the Holy Grail disappeared. From that time it was a favorite enterprise of the Knights of Arthur's court to go in search of it. Sir Galahad was at last successful in finding it, as may be read in the seventeenth book of the Romance of King Arthur. Tennyson has made Sir Galahad the subject of one of the most exquisite of his poems."

Over our manhood bend the skies;
  Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies;
  With our faint hearts the mountain strives;
Its arms outstretched, the druid wood
  Waits with its benedicite;
And to our age's drowsy blood
  Still shouts the inspiring sea.
Earth gets its price for what earth gives us:
  The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
  We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
  For a cap and bells our lives we pay:
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking;
  'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking.
No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June?
  Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,
  And over it softly her warm ear lays:
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
  An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
  Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers.

The flush of life may well be seen
  Thrilling back over hills and valleys;

The cowslip startles in meadows green,
  The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
  To be some happy creature's palace.

The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
  Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets its illumined being o'errun
  With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest:
In the nice ear of Nature, which song is the best?

Now is the high tide of the year,
  And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,
  Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,
We are happy now because God wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,
'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green.
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes but we cannot help knowing
That the skies are clear and grass is growing.

The breeze comes whispering in our ear
That dandelions are blossoming near,
  That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;

We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing—
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,
Everything is upward striving;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue—
'Tis the natural way of living.

Who knows whither the clouds have fled?
In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,
The heart forgets its sorrow and ache;
The soul partakes the season's youth,
And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,
Like burned-out craters healed with snow.
What wonder if Sir Launfal now
Remembered the keeping of his vow?

PART FIRST.

"My golden spurs now bring to me,
And bring to me my richest mail,
For to-morrow I go over land and sea
In search of the Holy Grail;
Shall never a bed for me be spread,
Nor shall a pillow be under my head,
Till I begin my vow to keep;
Here on the rushes will I sleep,

And perchance there may come a vision true
Ere day create the world anew."
  Slowly Sir Launfal's eyes grew dim,
  Slumber fell like a cloud on him,
And into his soul the vision flew.

The crows flapped over by twos and threes,
In the pool drowsed the cattle up to their knees,
  The little birds sang as if it were
  The one day of summer in all the year,
And the very leaves seemed to sing on the trees;
The castle alone in the landscape lay
Like an outpost of winter, dull and grey;
'Twas the proudest hall in the North Countree,
And never its gates might opened be,
Save to lord or lady of high degree.

Summer besieged it on every side,
But the churlish stone her assaults defied;
She could not scale the chilly wall,
Though round it for leagues her pavilions tall
Stretched left and right,
Over the hills and out of sight;
  Green and broad was every tent,
  And out of each a murmur went
Till the breeze fell off at night.

The drawbridge dropped with a surly clang,
And through the dark arch a charger sprang,
Bearing Sir Launfal, the maiden knight,
In his gilded mail, that flamed so bright
It seemed the dark castle had gathered all
Those shafts the fierce sun had shot over its wall
  In his siege of three hundred summers long,
And, binding them all in one blazing sheaf,

Had cast them forth: so, young and strong,
And lightsome as a locust-leaf,
Sir Launfal flashed forth in his unscarred mail,
To seek in all climes for the Holy Grail.

It was morning on hill and stream and tree,
And morning in the young knight's heart;
Only the castle moodily
Rebuffed the gifts of the sunshine free,
And gloomed by itself apart;
The season brimmed all other things up
Full as the rain fills the pitcher-plant's cup.

As Sir Launfal made morn through the darksome gate,
He was 'ware of a leper, crouched by the same,
Who begged with his hand and moaned as he sate;
And a loathing over Sir Launfal came:
The sunshine went out of his soul with a thrill,
The flesh 'neath his armour 'gan shrink and crawl,
And midway its leap his heart stood still
Like a frozen waterfall;
For this man, so foul and bent of stature,
Rasped harshly against his dainty nature,
And seemed the one blot on the summer morn—
So he tossed him a piece of gold in scorn.

The leper raised not the gold from the dust:
"Better to me the poor man's crust,
Better the blessing of the poor,
Though I turn me empty from his door;
That is no true alms which the hand can hold;
He gives nothing but worthless gold
Who gives from a sense of duty;
But he who gives a slender mite,
And gives to that which is ought of sight—

That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty
Which runs through all and doth all unite—
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,
The heart outstretches its eager palms,
For a god goes with it and makes it store
To the soul that was starving in darkness before."

PRELUDE TO PART SECOND.

Down swept the chill wind from the mountain peak,
From the snow five thousand summers old;
On open wold and hill-top bleak
It had gathered all the cold,
And whirled it like sleet on the wanderer's cheek;
It carried a shiver everywhere
From the unleafed boughs and pastures bare.

The little brook heard it and built a roof
'Neath which he could house him, winter-proof;
All night by the white stars' frosty gleams
He groined his arches and matched his beams;
Slender and clear were his crystal spars
As the lashes of light that trim the stars;
He sculptured every summer delight
In his halls and chambers out of sight.

Sometimes his tinkling waters slipt
Down through a frost-leaved forest crypt,
Long sparkling aisles of steel-stemmed trees
Bending to counterfeit a breeze;
Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew
But silvery mosses that downward grew;
Sometimes it was carved in sharp relief
With quaint arabesques of ice-fern leaf;

Sometimes it was simply smooth and clear
For the gladness of heaven to shine through, and here
He had caught the nodding bulrush-tops
And hung them thickly with diamond drops,
That crystalled the beams of moon and sun,
And made a star of every one.

No mortal builder's most rare device
Could match this winter-palace of ice;
'Twas as if every image that mirrored lay
In his depths serene through the summer day,
Each fleeting shadow of earth and sky,
  Lest the happy model should be lost,
Had been mimicked in fairy masonry
  By the elfin builders of the frost.

Within the hall are song and laughter,
  The cheeks of Christmas grow red and jolly,
And sprouting is every corbel and rafter
  With lightsome green of ivy and holly;
Through the deep gulf of the chimney wide
Wallows the Yule-log's roaring tide;
The broad flame-pennons droop and flap
  And belly and tug as a flag in the wind;
Like a locust shrills the imprisoned sap,
  Hunted to death in its galleries blind;
And swift little troops of silent sparks,
  Now pausing, now scattering away as in fear,
Go threading the soot-forest's tangled darks
  Like herds of startled deer.

But the wind without was eager and sharp,
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp,
And rattles and wrings
The icy strings,

Singing, in dreary monotone,
A Christmas carol of its own,
Whose burden still, as he might guess,
Was—"Shelterless, shelterless, shelterless!"

The voice of the seneschal flared like a torch
As he shouted the wanderer away from the porch,
And he sat in the gateway and saw all night
  The great hall-fire, so cheery and bold,
  Through the window-slits of the castle old,
Build out its piers of ruddy light
  Against the drift of the cold.

PART SECOND.

There was never a leaf on bush or tree,
The bare boughs rattled shudderingly;
The river was numb and could not speak,
  For the weaver Winter its shroud had spun;
A single crow on the tree-top bleak
  From his shining feathers shed off the cold sun;
Again it was morning, but shrunk and cold,
As if her veins were sapless and old,
And she rose up decrepitly
For a last dim look at earth and sea.

Sir Launfal turned from his own hard gate,
For another heir in his earldom sate;
An old, bent man, worn out and frail,
He came back from seeking the Holy Grail;
Little he recked of his earldom's loss,
No more on his surcoat was blazoned the cross,
But deep in his soul the sign he wore,
The badge of the suffering and the poor.

Sir Launfal's raiment thin and spare
Was idle mail 'gainst the barbéd air,
For it was just at the Christmas time;
So he mused, as he sat, of a sunnier clime,
And sought for a shelter from cold and snow
In the light and warmth of long ago:
He sees the snake-like caravan crawl
O'er the edge of the desert, black and small,
Then nearer and nearer, till, one by one,
He can count the camels in the sun,
As over the red-hot sands they pass
To where, in its slender necklace of grass,
The little spring laughed and leapt in the shade,
And with its own self like an infant played,
And waved its signal of palms.

"For Christ's sweet sake, I beg an alms:"—
The happy camels may reach the spring,
But Sir Launfal sees only the grewsome thing,
The leper, lank as the rain-blanched bone,
That cowers beside him—a thing as lone
And white as the ice-isles of Northern seas—
In the desolate horror of his disease.

And Sir Launfal said, "I behold in thee
An image of Him who died on the tree;
Thou also hast had thy crown of thorns,
Thou also hast had the world's buffets and scorns,
And to thy life were not denied
The wounds in the hands and feet and side:
Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me;
Behold, through him, I give to thee!"

Then the soul of the leper stood up in his eyes
And looked at Sir Launfal, and straightway he

Remembered in what a haughtier guise
He had flung an alms to leprosie,
When he girt his young life up in gilded mail
And set forth in search of the Holy Grail.
The heart within him was ashes and dust;
He parted in twain his single crust,
He broke the ice on the streamlet's brink,
And gave the leper to eat and drink:

'Twas a mouldy crust of coarse brown bread,
'Twas water out of a wooden bowl—
Yet with fine wheaten bread was the leper fed,
And 'twas red wine he drank with his thirsty soul.

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast face,
A light shone round about the place;
The leper no longer crouched at his side,
But stood before him glorified,
Shining and tall and fair and straight
As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate—
Himself the Gate whereby men can
Enter the temple of God in Man.
His words were shed softer than leaves from the pine,
And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows on the brine,
Which mingle their softness and quiet in one
With the shaggy unrest they float down upon;
And the voice that was calmer than silence said:

"Lo, it is I, be not afraid!
In many climes, without avail,
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold it is here—this cup which thou
Didst fill at the streamlet for me but now;
This crust is my body broken for thee,
This water His blood that died on the tree;

The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need;
Not what we give, but what we share—
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three—
Himself, his hungering neighbour, and me."

Sir Launfal awoke as from a swound:—
"The Grail in my castle here is found!
Hang my idle armour up on the wall,
Let it be the spider's banquet-hall;
He must be fenced with stronger mail
Who would seek and find the Holy Grail."

The castle gate stands open now,
And the wanderer is welcome to the hall
As the hang-bird is to the elm-tree bough;
No longer scowl the turrets tall,
The summer's long siege at last is o'er;
When the first poor outcast went in at the door,
She entered with him in disguise,
And mastered the fortress by surprise:
There is no spot she loves so well on ground,
She lingers and smiles there the whole year round.
The meanest serf on Sir Launfal's land
Has hall and bower at his command;
And there's no poor man in the North Countree
But is lord of the earldom as much as he.

II. THE PRESENT CRISIS.

When a deed is done for Freedom, through the broad earth's aching breast,
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on from east to west,

And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels the soul within him
climb
To the awful verge of manhood, as the energy sublime
Of a century bursts full-blossomed on the thorny stem of Time.

Through the walls of hut and palace shoots the instantaneous
throe,
When the travail of the Ages wrings earth's systems to and fro;
At the birth of each new Era, with a recognising start,
Nation wildly looks at nation, standing with mute lips apart,
And glad Truth's yet mightier man-child leaps beneath the
Future's heart.

So the Evil's triumph sendeth, with a terror and a chill,
Under continent to continent, the sense of coming ill,
And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels his sympathies with God
In hot tear-drops ebbing earthward, to be drunk up by the sod,
Till a corpse crawls round unburied, delving in the nobler clod!

For mankind are one in spirit, and an instinct bears along,
Round the earth's electric circle, the swift flash of right or wrong;
Whether conscious or unconscious, yet Humanity's vast frame
Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels the gush of joy or shame;
In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim.

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom
or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left-hand, and the sheep upon the
right,—
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that
light!

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on whose party thou shalt stand,
Ere the Doom from its worn sandals shakes the dust against our land?
Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 'tis Truth alone is strong;
And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see around her throng
Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield her from all wrong.

Backward look across the ages and the beacon-moments see,
That, like peaks of some sunk continent, jut through Oblivion's sea;
Not an ear in court or market for the low foreboding cry
Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers; from whose feet earth's chaff must fly;
Never shows the choice momentous till the judgment hath passed by.

Careless seems the great Avenger; History's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

We see dimly in the Present what is small and what is great,
Slow of faith how weak an arm may turn the iron helm of fate;
But the soul is still oracular: amid the market's din
List the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave within,—
"They enslave their children's children who make compromise with sin."

Slavery, the earthborn Cyclops, fellest of the giant brood,
Sons of brutish Force and Darkness, who have drenched the earth with blood,
Famished in his self-made desert, blinded by our purer day,

Gropes in yet unblasted regions for his miserable prey:
Shall we guide his gory fingers where our helpless children play?
Then to side with Truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just;
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they had denied.

Count me o'er Earth's chosen heroes,—they were souls that stood alone
While the men they agonized for hurled the contumelious stone;—
Stood serene and down the future saw the golden beam incline
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back,
And these mounts of anguish number how each generation learned
One new word of that grand *Credo* which in prophet-hearts hath burned
Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to heaven upturned.

For humanity sweeps onward: where to-day the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;
Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.

'Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our fathers' graves;

Worshippers of light ancestral make the present light a crime;—
Was the Mayflower launched by cowards, steered by men behind their time?
Turn those tracks toward Past or Future, that make Plymouth Rock sublime?

They were men of present valor, stalwart old iconoclasts;
Unconvinced by ax or gibbet that all virtue was the Past's;
But we make their truth out falsehood, thinking that hath made us free,
Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender spirits flee
The rude grasp of that great Impulse which drove them across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain them; we are traitors to our sires,
Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's new-lit altar fires;
Shall we make their creed our jailer? Shall we, in our haste to slay,
From the tombs of the old prophets steal the funeral lamps away
To light up the martyr-fagots round the prophets of to-day?

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

III. LONGING.

Of all the myriad moods of mind,
That through the soul come thronging,
Which one was e'er so dear, so kind,
So beautiful as Longing?

The thing we long for, *that* we are,
For one transcendent moment,
Before the present, poor and bare,
Can make its sneering comment.

Still, through our paltry stir and strife,
Glows down the wished Ideal,
And Longing moulds in clay what Life
Carves in the marble Real;

To let new life in, well we know,
Desire must ope the portal;—
Perhaps the Longing to be so
Helps make the soul immortal.

Longing is God's fresh heavenward will,
With our poor earthward striving;
We quench it that we may be still,
Content with only living.

But would we learn that heart's full scope
Which we are hourly wronging,
Our lives must climb from hope to hope,
And realise our Longing.

Ah! let us hope that to our praise
Good God not only reckons
The moments when we tread His ways,
But when the spirit beckons,—

That some slight good is also wrought
  Beyond self-satisfaction,
When we are simply good in thought,
  Howe'er we fail in action.